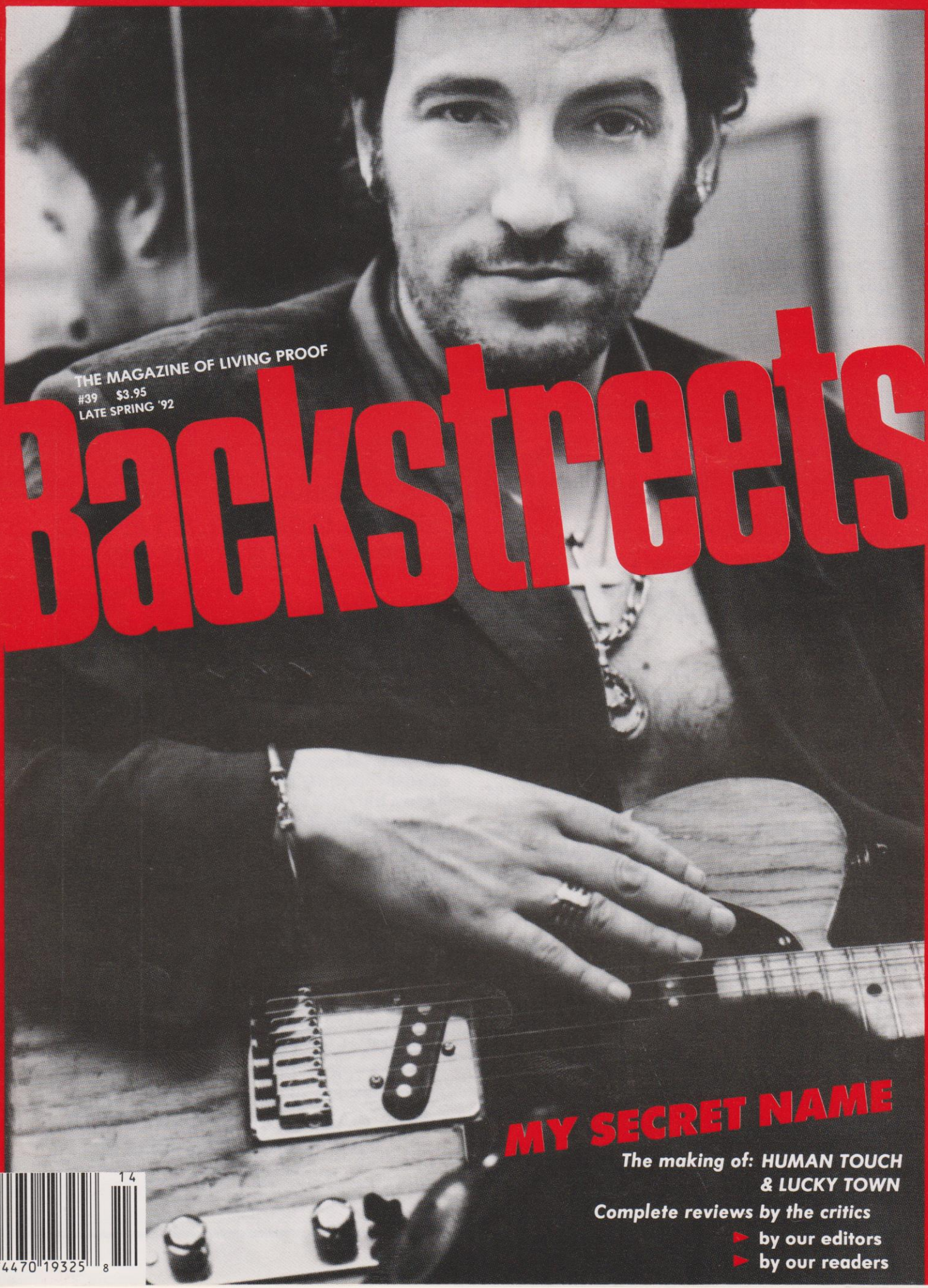


THE MAGAZINE OF LIVING PROOF
#39 $3.95
LATE SPRING '92

Backstreets

MY SECRET NAME

The making of: ***HUMAN TOUCH & LUCKY TOWN***

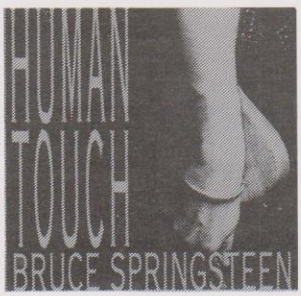
Complete reviews by the critics

- by our editors
- by our readers

0 74470 19325 8 14

ALL NEW ITEMS AT BACKSTREET RECORDS!

US: THE VINYL ALBUMS. Both *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town* are available on domestic vinyl but in limited quantities. Order soon to ensure availability. $11 each or $25 for both, including postage.



US: THE COMPACT DISCS. Both albums on CD. $14 each.

US 7" features "Human Touch" b/w "Better Days." No picture sleeve on this. Hard to find. $4.

US CD5 features "Human Touch" b/w "Better Days." Cool shot of Bruce against a desert sky background. $5 plus postage. Also available on CASSETTE with PICTURE COVER! Nice! $5.

JUST IN! UK CD5 "Better Days" with first new non-LP B-side, the studio version of "Part Man, Part Monkey." Also collects the live version of "Tougher than the Rest" from 1988. Import only. $14.

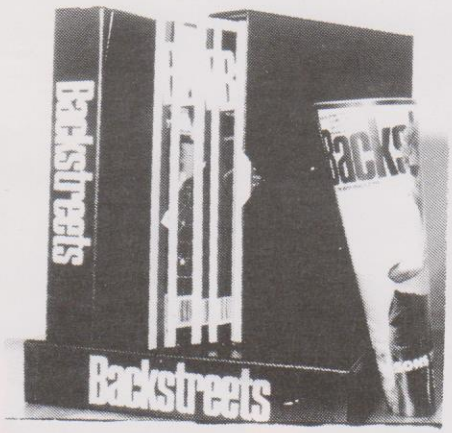
UK CD5 features "Human Touch," "Souls of the Departed," and "Long Goodbye." Cool cover of Bruce standing against a desert sky. $14.

UK CD5 Picture Disc. Ultra cool picture disc of desert sky shot. Housed in a blue sleeve with die-cut (cut-out) lettering and a cool gold-mirrored sleeve insert. Numbered and limited. $15.

SPECIAL! GET BOTH THE UK CD5 AND CD5 PICTURE DISC FOR ONLY $25. A $29 VALUE!

UK 7" single w/ "Human Touch" and "Souls..." Slick heavy stock PS "desert sky" shot. $8.

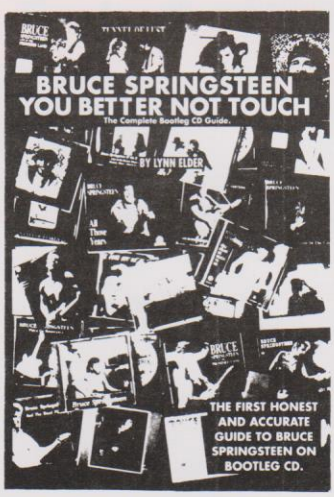
THE BACKSTREETS BINDER



The Backstreets Binder is the perfect way to preserve those backissues. This heavy duty, attractive binder holds up to 25 backissues of your favorite magazine. It's black, with gold type on the spine and is yours free with the purchase of any 6 backissues or for only $15 if purchased separately. Backissues #14-33 are available, except #29. Fill in those holes in your collection and get a free binder. A great gift. Backissues #14-32 are $5 each (#33 is $10). To order, call 1-800-326-BOSS or send check, money order, or credit card info to the address below.

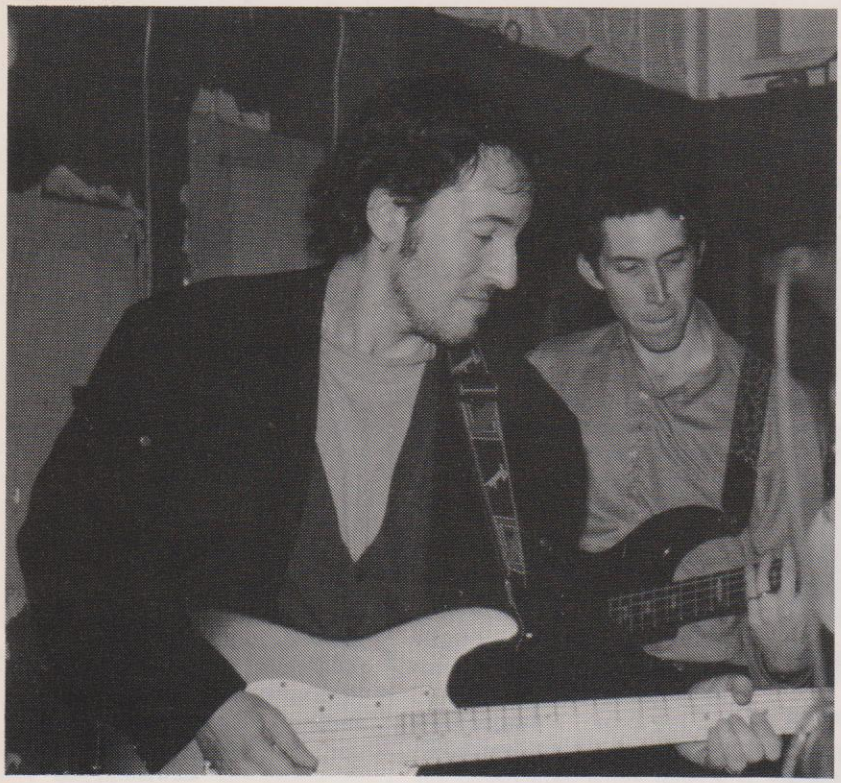
THE COMPLETE CD BOOTLEG GUIDE

Imported from Great Britain, this is the first comprehensive guide to Bruce Springsteen on Bootleg Compact Disc. Thorough, honest, and well-illustrated, this book compiles the more than 70 titles already in existence. Discs are reviewed for their content, sound quality, packaging, performance, etc. The guide also includes a brief section on the history, manufacture, and legality of bootleg CD's. Available in the U.S. exclusively through Backstreet Records. $10 per copy plus $3 shipping per copy US, $5 shipping per copy overseas. Send check, money order, or credit card information to the address below.


BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
YOU BETTER NOT TOUCH
The Complete Bootleg CD Guide.
BY LYNN ELDER
THE FIRST HONEST AND ACCURATE GUIDE TO BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN ON BOOTLEG CD.

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
YOU BETTER NOT TOUCH

SEND ORDERS TO:
BACKSTREET RECORDS
PO BOX 51219
SEATTLE, WA 98115
OR CALL: (206) 728-7603
FAX (206) 728-8827



CHERYL GERBER PHOTO

Backstreets

Editor
Charles R. Cross

Associate Editors
Erik Flannigan, Jonathan B. Pont, Robert Santelli

Contributors
Grant Alden, Robert Allen, Scott Byron, Randy Cepuch, Art Chantry, David Day, David DuBois, Lynn Elder, Jimmy Guterman, Jared Houser, Josh Jacobson, Phil and Steve Jump, Ruth Kelley, Ermanno Labianca, Jeff McDermott, Paul Jay Plutzer, Jim Ragsdale, Bernie Ranellone, Debra L. Rothenberg, Mike Saunders, Arlen Schumer, Joe Schwind, James Shive, Billy Smith, Mark Stricherz, Rinaldo Tagliabue, Adem Tepedelen, Marty Venturo, Bob Zimmerman, And many others whose help is essential.

Backstreets (ISSN 0746-990X) is published quarterly by Backstreets Publishing Inc., PO Box 51225, Seattle, WA 98115, USA with offices at 2028 5th Avenue, Seattle, WA. Please address **all** correspondence to *Backstreets*, PO Box 51225, Seattle, WA 98115. FAX (206) 728-8827. Subscriptions are available for $15 a year or $25 for two years in the US and Canada (payment must be in US funds only), or for overseas airmail, rates are $20 a year or $35 for two years (again only in US funds). All contents are copyright © 1991, Backstreets Publishing Inc. Please include a self addressed, stamped envelope with **any** inquiries. Second class postage paid at Seattle, Washington, and at additional mailing offices.
POSTMASTER: Please send all address changes to *Backstreets*, PO Box 51225, Seattle, WA 98115. Thank you. *Backstreets* is an independent publication and is not officially associated with any of the performers we write about or their record companies.

RRR

Reduce, Reuse and **Recycle**
Reduce waste: Pass *Backstreets* on to a friend
Reuse: Save *Backstreets* as a resource
Recycle: All paper products

CONTENTS

39
Vol. 10, No. 3
Spring 1992
See you on tour

Features

MY SECRET NAME
By Charles R. Cross. 14

HUMAN TOUCH
The outtakes for album No. 10 18

HUMAN TOUCH AND LUCKY TOWN
As reviewed by critics and readers. 21

Departments

LETTERS
To the editors of Backstreets 4

ON THE BACKSTREETS
Our readers and our reasons. 6

IN THE NEWS
Backstreets book issued in paperback 7

IN THE NEWS
The wait ends and the tour begins. 8

ON LIPS
Fighting ticket scams in California 9

IN THE NEWS
The first guest appearance of '92. 10

GREETINGS FROM ASBURY PARK
By Robert Santelli 11

IN THE NEWS
Bruce plays the Bottom Line 12

IN THE NEWS
First live appearance on Saturday Night 13

ON COLLECTING
15 great shows for the novice tape trader. 28

ON COLLECTING
Reviews of the latest bootleg CDs 30

ON DISC
The newest imports for the new albums 32

CLASSIFIEDS
Pen pals, messages, and tapes. 33

Cover

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
by David Rose
Photo courtesy Columbia Records

LETTERS

STAND

Dear Editor:

Ron Wells makes an interesting point about how some dealers and buyers have taken the fun out of collecting Bruce paraphernalia (#38), but some of his comments make me wonder if he isn't guilty of some of the same fanaticism he finds so scary in others.

Particularly irksome is his completely close-ended question about whether Bruce's fans protested the Gulf War. This implied that one can't both be a fan and a supporter of the war and are bound to a political viewpoint because it is the perceived political viewpoint of an artist whose records they listen to.

I believe most fans continue to support Bruce because he is the finest singer, songwriter, and live performer around whose body of work, though perhaps smaller than some of his peers, is without question unmatched in quality and continued resonance. Whether I agree with Bruce politically — and lately I don't — won't diminish how I feel about his music. That he has a viewpoint is enough. The inability of some people to separate the art from the perceived politics of the artist is a major reason why political correctness is such a problem today. Would some of these people have thrown out their Bruce albums if he had come out along with the vast majority of Americans and supported the Gulf War?

Sadly, they probably would have.

Joe Fierro
Clifton, NJ

THE LONG GOODBYE

Dear Editor:

A few days ago, I went to the local shopping mall and met President Bush. He was very cordial and signed autographs and shook hands by the hundreds. I wasn't interested in an autograph, I just wanted to meet the President; that alone is a very rare distinction. I told the President that it was an honor to meet him and he kindly acknowledged me and and grasped my hand very tightly.

The shopping mall was a cross section of middle-class America, young and old alike. Politics aside, these people came to greet our Nation's leader. I felt for a few moments a real union with these strangers as a strong dose of red, white, and blue surged through the mall.

I didn't have the heart to tell him I'm not voting for him.

As the motorcade left the parking lot, Mr. Bush waved a heartful goodbye to those standing outside in the zero degree evening; one of those to whom the goodbye seemed ironic was a man all bundled up under a light post with a handmade sign that read: "Mr. President: I need a job!"

Joseph Lahr
Manchester, NH

IT AIN'T ME, BABE

Dear Editor:

I take offense at how you think people who "jumped on the bandwagon in the 80s" are leaving Springsteen at this point in his career. I really didn't realize who Bruce was until 1984. I was watching MTV and saw this scruffy-faced leather-jacketed screaming man on my screen; I was a fan from then on. Don't be so high and mighty as to think that if you didn't discover Springsteen before '75 that that makes you less of a fan. It doesn't. Being a Springsteen fan in '84 at my high school was not easy. Only girls and a few guys were fans, and I took a lot of flak from the metal heads for my taste.

Not seeing Springsteen in concert in your state is also hard. The last time he played in my hometown was in 1977 and I was eight years old.

I have been waiting patiently and impatiently for four years for a new album. I love your magazine and will always be a Springsteen fan.

Jim Cosgrove
Lewiston, ME

LEAP OF FAITH

Dear Editor:

I have mixed feelings concerning the announcement of the two albums. On the one hand, I am very excited because the wait will soon be over after four and a half years.

On the other hand, I am also confused about the need for two separate albums instead of a double album or CD. In these troubled economic times, I question why the need for two separate albums instead of a double CD?

The decision to have people pay twice is a bit unfair, but I am more than willing to pay for whatever Bruce releases. Many of his fans may not have the money to purchase both CDs. How fair is this when someone goes to the record store and has to choose between Bruce albums because he or she may not be able to afford both?

I understand that the record industry is a business and that Bruce is a valuable commodity, so the attraction of two new releases from Bruce could become a cash cow for Sony/Columbia. I just hope that the price for these releases are moderate enough so that the fans who have been waiting for so long for new Bruce music can

ORIGINAL SPRINGSTEEN TOURBOOKS

THE RIVER • BORN IN THE USA 1984
WORLD TOUR 1985 • TUNNEL OF LOVE

THE RIVER $15

USA '84 $20

WORLD TOUR '85 $15

TUNNEL OF LOVE $20

These outstanding official tourbooks were sold exclusively at Springsteen concerts. Each is packed with photos, most unused elsewhere, and plenty of information on the tours and the songs. All four are out-of-print and have been unavailable anywhere since they were sold on tour. Essential items and great gifts for any Bruce fan.

To Order: Add $5 shipping per order in the US and Canada, $8 shipping per copy for overseas airmail. Send check, money order or credit card info to: Tourbooks, Backstreet Records, PO Box 51219 Seattle, WA 98115.

afford them, especially in these tough economic times.

Anthony Loiacono
Smithtown, NY

LIVING PROOF

Dear Editor:

I never thought that a fan would call Bruce Springsteen a racist! This is what Mary E. Fox implies (Letters, *Backstreets* #37).

Where do Michael Jackson, Prince, Bill Cosby , Eddie Murphy, Sidney Poitier, Harry Bellafonte, Ray Charles, and Little Richard live? Do they live in ghettos? No, they live in Beverly Hills, Malibu, or the like. Even Spike Lee doesn't live in the slums. Rap artists don't. Kevin Costner, who did "Dances with Wolves," doesn't live on an Indian reservation. He lives in some plush L.A. area, too.

It's finances that separate people, not color.

Might I add that Springsteen seldom dresses like a star. Most of the time he looks almost like a tramp.

Chantal Constant
Paris, France

HAVIN' A PARTY

Dear Editor:

March 13, 1992 is a day that I will always remember. Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes hit Oslo and some friends and I follow suit for a thrilling night. We had to wait over an hour in the cold of the Norwegian night before the doors opened.

But after a while, somebody came out of the bus. It was none other than Southside Johnny himself! He gladly signed our copies of *Better Days* and we asked him to play "The Fever" and he said, "Sure, if you want." He inquired whether we had any other requests and someone replied, "Just give us your best." Then, as he was going in for the soundcheck, he turned and shouted with a smile, "It's cold out here! Go get a beer!"

And give their best they did that night. Included in the show were "The Fever," "Fade Away," and "All the Way Home." It was a killer show; he played for two and a half hours in all. He also told us that he'd be back.

So thank you Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes. We'll never forget you.

Oystein Roseth
Hamar, Norway

CHIMES OF FREEDOM

Dear Editor:

In 1989, activists in the Lima, Peru, chapter of Amnesty International, people whose lives are continually at risk from many sides, asked me for a copy of the Human Rights Now! tour video. Given their special interest in Springsteen, I had my own home-taped copy of the special sent to them.

Last week, I rode in a car through the dark streets of Guatemala City with Guatemalan activists, all of us listening to *Nebraska*, while soberly pondering the repressive politics there and the way that our own government's policies exacerbate them. Later, when I flew back to the US, I was listening on my headset to Bruce's performance for the Christic Institute, eagerly anticipating his two new recordings.

Finally, I had the albums and stayed up until two in the morning listening on my headphones while my wife and two young daughters slept upstairs.

There is some danceable, joyous stuff here, including testimonies to highs and lows of parenthood and relationships. I know that we'll enjoy them.

Nevertheless, I expected more from an artist who traveled the world in 1988 with Amnesty International and challenged his audience more forthrightly than ever before. I expected more from an artist who had performed on behalf of the Christic Institute. I expected more from an artist who challenged the complacent America of Ronald Reagan and George Bush. I expected a political awareness without the political correctness, but maybe in his upcoming shows, Springsteen will find a way to yoke his celebration of the nuclear family to the needs of the wider structural changes of today's world.

Mark Kline Taylor
Princeton, NJ

RARE FRAMED & MOUNTED SPRINGSTEEN PASSES

Limited edition leftover tour passes each beautifully framed and mounted, many one of a kind,so fax us today.

FAX # (412)931-6735

OR for a Custom Springsteen list send $1.00 to ROCK FANTASY P.O. BOX 7085 PGH. PA 15212

Out now from Harmony Books
208 pages. Hardbound. $24.95

LED ZEPPELIN

✝

HEAVEN AND HELL

By Charles R. Cross and Erik Flannigan with photographs by Neal Preston

in living color

You'll be dazed but not confused when you feast your eyes on *Led Zeppelin, Heaven and Hell,* the first book to take you onstage with all the power and glory of Led Zeppelin. With over 150 photographs (most never previously published), by noted photographers like Neal Preston, Jim Marshall, Chris Dreja and Herb Greene, *Heaven and Hell* captures the band in glorious color that will blow your mind. The text concentrates on the music the band has created, not a celebration or a recollection of rumors. Finally, *Heaven and Hell* offers the most exhaustive and extensive chronology of concert dates and set lists ever assembled.

Available for $24.95 (US funds) plus shipping (add $4 in the US, $7 airmail to Canada, $16 airmail elsewhere) from Backstreet Records, PO Box 51219, Seattle, WA 98115. Or call 1-800-326-2677 toll free to order today.

THE BACK TO STREETS

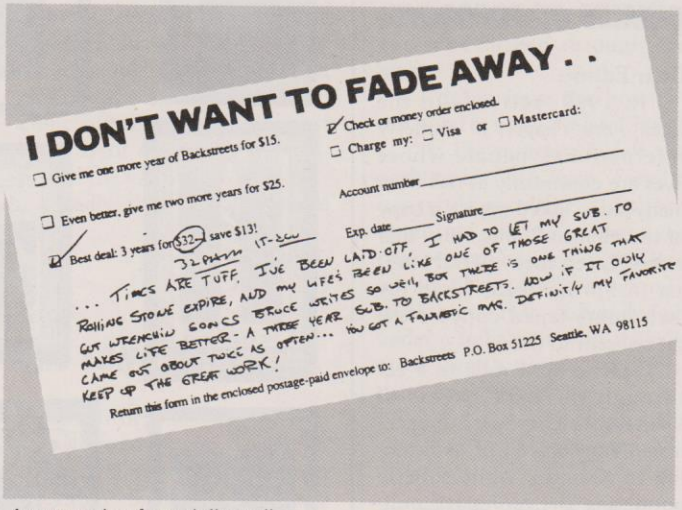
A letter from the Air Force

Living Proof

The other day I got a note in the mail from the Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Air Force. It wasn't a draft notice or a letter chastising me for my "Farms Not Arms" bumpersticker. It was a brief handwritten note thanking me for the hours put into this "labor of love" that you know as *Backstreets*.

The note started me thinking about the human touch that goes into this magazine in the form of the many subscribers, some even in the Air Force, and supporters all around the world. Usually this column is about Springsteen's music or my life but this time around I thought it made sense to remind us all that *Backstreets* is much more than just the effort of the staff. We are able to produce this modest effort only because of the continued support of subscribers and Springsteen fans around the globe. Our readers support us not only by subscribing to the magazine, but also by acting as an army of correspondents, sending in faxes, reviews, and comments. You'll find many of our subscribers' new album reviews in this issue and reading them over I found myself amazed at their intelligence and insight. At times you'll find the reader comments far more revealing than those offered by the critics which also appear here.

Backstreets is more than just the paper and ink you hold in your hands: It represents a community of like-minded individuals worldwide. Admittedly, the concept for this publication is a strange one, particularly since we are not an in-house organ of the artist we write about. *Backstreets* is the unadulterated opinion of the editors and the readers. At times we've gotten grief from CBS or management for our outspoken opinions, but since our main goal has always been to give a voice to the community of our readers, we've remained true to


I DON'T WANT TO FADE AWAY . .

☐ Give me one more year of Backstreets for $15. ☑ Check or money order enclosed.

☐ Charge my: ☐ Visa or ☐ Mastercard:

☐ Even better, give me two more years for $25. Account number

☑ Best deal: 3 years for $32 save $13! Exp. date Signature

... TIMES ARE TUFF, I'VE BEEN LAID OFF, I HAD TO LET MY SUB. TO Rolling Stone EXPIRE, AND MY LIFE'S BEEN LIKE ONE OF THOSE GREAT OLE WRENCHIN SONGS BRUCE WRITES SO WELL, BUT THERE IS ONE THING THAT MAKES LIFE BETTER - A THREE YEAR SUB. TO BACKSTREETS. NOW IF IT ONLY CAME OUT ABOUT TWICE AS OFTEN... YOU GOT A FANTASTIC MAG. DEFINITELY MY FAVORITE KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK!

Return this form in the enclosed postage-paid envelope to: Backstreets P.O. Box 51225 Seattle, WA 98115

An example of our daily mail.

our principles. Reporting on an artist when his record company and management won't even send you a press release has its difficulties and occasionally we've blown a report here and there. Nonetheless, I argue that over time *Backstreets* has offered the most complete, accurate and fairest coverage of Bruce Springsteen, which is to the credit of our subscribers, contributors, and editors

In addition to the Air Force stationery, the many other pieces of letterhead we get and the personal correspondence we receive gives us some idea of who "we" are. Subscribers include an employee of the Commissioner's office of Major League Baseball, who has been subscribing since we were a little newsprint fanzine. Another subscriber is an NBA ref with a reputation for calling fouls as he sees them. Watching TV I've seen him take on some of the biggest players around and not back down. Another subscriber works for the ATP, the professional tennis association, and another plays golf professionally and makes a dandy living doing so.

On the phone the other day, I talked to a college lacrosse player from West Virginia (you can catch him on ESPN) who told me a hilarious story of running into Bruce backstage at a concert and asking him what he thinks of *Backstreets*. Bruce told the guy it gave him a chance to read what his fans were thinking (a consideration not visibly appreciated by management). A large number of *Backstreets'* subscribers are in college, in institutions from Stanford to Southwestern Mississippi Community College. We also count a few professors on our subscription roles, and numerous graduate students (one just sent us a paper on sexuality in Springsteen's songs—and it's a steamer.).

There are a surprisingly large number of lawyers who subscribe to the magazine, and several of our contributing editors are attorneys. When one of our contributing photographers got sued for divorce recently, another subscriber/lawyer took his case on *pro bono*.

Librarians are particularly well represented among our subscribers. They hail from rural Texas, to New York City, to Chicago, which is why you can actually find our strange magazine in some progressive libraries. My guess is that librarians like Springsteen's work because it is so strong lyrically. We like librarians because they have access to many periodicals and are kind enough to send us clippings (which we appreciate getting from anyone. One meatpacker who subscribes is the best read person I know).

At least one famous movie star subscribes to *Backstreets*. One member of a Grammy award winning group gets the magazine (we put him on our comp list when he asked, hoping one day to get a board tape in exchange, hint, hint). At least a dozen people who work for CBS around the world subscribe to the magazine. Though Bruce's organization has never offered financial assistance and we've never gotten as much as promo copy of a new album from the label, we do occasionally get checks from CBS for $15 subscription renewals which helps pay for copies of the new albums. Subscribers also include employees of five other record labels, all of whom are secretly hoping Bruce jumps ship to their companies.

Our readers come from all economic groups and all ethnic backgrounds. A woman from California has no vowels in her name while every other subscriber in Chicago has a name that ends with "ski." At least two of our subscribers are blind (and probably more than a few are deaf since if you'd attended many Bruce shows you start to lose your hearing quickly). At least two of our subscribers are presently incarcerated, debts no honest man can pay.

One subscriber, who is also a serious collector, works for Tavern on the Green in New York, one of the most successful restaurants in the world. Our mailing lists includes stock brokers and teenagers working at McDonald's. We get mail from an employee of the United States Senate (he usually pays by check), from a big shot at IBM, and from a millionaire at Microsoft.

Members of the media seem to represent a disproportionate

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

THE NEWS

Revisions and New Photos

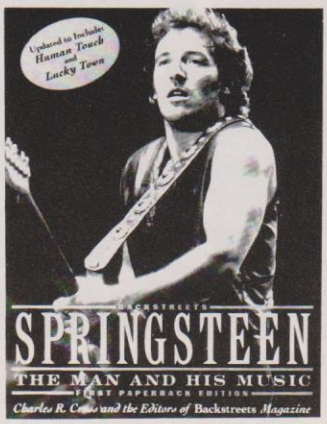
Backstreets Paperback Issued

An updated and revised edition of the acclaimed book *Backstreets, Springsteen: The Man and His Music* by Charles R. Cross and the editors of *Backstreets* magazine will be in stores by June. The book has been extensively revised from the hardcover edition which was a bestseller in many areas of the nation when it was first issued in September 1989.

Editors Charles R. Cross and Erik Flannigan worked six months on the revision and more than 100 pages of the original edition were revised, corrected or replaced. The paperback edition features the addition of the exhaustive interview Cross conducted with Mike Appel where the infamous former manager detailed for the first time ever his breakup with Bruce and the resulting legal action. Also new in the paperback is Robert Santelli's wide-ranging interview with E Street Band keyboard player Danny Federici, one of the only interviews Federici has ever granted. In the interview, Federici details his long relationship with Springsteen and he reveals what really happened with the split between Springsteen and the E Street Band.

The extensive concert listings from the hardback have been expanded to include dates from 1988 through 1992. Additionally, numerous dates never before disclosed in print have been listed, adding another 100 dates to the concert listing. Set lists for many new shows have been added to give a more complete summation of Bruce Springsteen's live performance career. These listings now include major critical reviews of many of Springsteen's shows.

The studio sessionography has been completely revised and now includes another 150 song titles never before disclosed. Using recently unearthed studio records, the chapter now details dates and times certain songs were recorded. Included are Springsteen's alternate titles, arrangements, and original song selection for each album (including an early song list of what Springsteen had selected for *Born in the USA*, one that dramatically differs from the released album). Complete session information for the *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town* albums is included.


Updated to Include Human Touch and Lucky Town
SPRINGSTEEN
THE MAN AND HIS MUSIC
FIRST PAPERBACK EDITION
Charles R. Cross and the Editors of Backstreets Magazine

The paperback edition of *Backstreets, Springsteen: The Man and His Music* boasts more than 30 new photographs, many in color. Included are never-before-seen shots by noted photographer Barbara Pyle, who travelled extensively with Springsteen on the 1975 tour. Also featured in the paperback are never-before-seen shots by Peter Philbin, Springsteen's liaison with Columbia Records who photographed him onstage at the Roxy in 1975 and on his first tour of Europe. Work by both Philbin and Pyle have long been sought after by Springsteen fans and have only appeared in a few publications, notably the *Born to Run* songbook and the October 27, 1975 *Time* and *Newsweek* cover stories.

Other color photos include those by Mary Alfieri of Bruce in the early '70s, never-before-seen Phil Ceccola prints, and a color portrait of Bruce, Southside and Steven by Larry Busacca from last year's Stone Pony video shoot. Several previously unpublished shots of Springsteen from his pre-E Street days are published in this edition. A new color cover photo captures Springsteen live during his successful Amnesty International *Human Rights Now!* tour in the autumn of 1988.

When first released in hardback on September 23, 1989, *The Man and His Music* received enthusiastic reviews from critics. The *Los Angeles Daily News* called the publication of the hardback "One of the most important rock books of the year. Handsome, hefty and substantial. . . ." *Billboard* called it "the best material to date on Bruce's roots and the Jersey Shore music scene." MTV's Kurt Loder said, "Everything you could ever want to know about Bruce and a whole lot more." The *Vancouver Province* wrote "One of the best books ever written about pop music. The definitive book, a bible. As big and colorful as a performance by the E Street Band."

The paperback edition of *Backstreets, Springsteen: The Man and His Music* features the same superior color reproduction of photos and text as the hardbound edition. The 224 page paperback is being published in an oversize trade edition so the photographs will be large and dramatic. *Backstreets, Springsteen: The Man and His Music* features more color photographs than any other book on Springsteen, and most of these photographs have never been published anywhere else. *Backstreets, Springsteen: The Man and His Music* will be available in fine bookstores by mid-June to coincide with Springsteen's 1992 world tour. Backstreet Records plans to have the book by late May, and will offer a special signed first paperback edition, packaged with the first ever reprint edition of *Backstreets #1*, for $24 postpaid in the United States ($27 US funds to Canada; or $34 US funds overseas airmail). Orders for the signed edition can be sent to Backstreet Records, PO Box 51219, Seattle, WA 98115 or faxed to (206) 728-8827. The reprint of *Backstreets #1* is slightly smaller and is an exact copy, though distinguished from the original by the color of the ink. The reprint of *Backstreets #1* is only available only as a premium with the paperback edition.

the backstreets jukebox

1. **Bruce Springsteen**
   Lucky Town
   Columbia(CD)
2. **Bruce Springsteen**
   Human Touch
   Columbia(CD)
3. **Gregson & Collister**
   The Last Word
   RNA (CD)
4. **Big Star**
   A Little Big Star
   Rykodisc (Promo CD)
5. **Throwing Muses**
   Real Ramona
   Sire (CD)
6. **Gary US Bonds**
   On the Line
   Razor and Tie (CD)
7. **Lou Reed**
   Magic and Loss
   Sire (CD)
8. **U2**
   Achtung Baby
   Island (CD)
9. **Led Zeppelin**
   In Through the Out Door
   Swan Song (CD)
10. **Mazzy Star**
    She Hangs Brightly
    Capitol (CD)

10
Monster
Discs to Play Today and Everyday

THE NEWS

Tours: Europe 2, US 1

Springsteen Returns With Two Albums

Finally. After years of rumors, official announcement of two new Bruce Springsteen albums was made on Thursday, January 23. The press release said simply, "Two new Bruce Springsteen albums set for simultaneous early Spring release." It was a welcome end to months of phone gossip and faxed hearsay regarding Bruce's latest releases.

The first solid clue about the records was revealed nearly two weeks before the official announcement. That's when a record called *Human Touch* appeared on Sony's new release schedule, slated for March 31. The album was credited to the curiously named artist "Rigid Man," and it raised a red flag to Boss detectives on the trail of Bruce's new album.

The story broke wide open on Monday, January 19, when sources disclosed that *Human Touch* was indeed the new Bruce record and that there would be a second record as well. By Wednesday, that title was revealed to be *Lucky Town*, and on Thursday the official word was out, with a list of all 24 song titles and the principal musicians involved.

Many of those titles and personnel should be familiar to readers of *Backstreets*. In *Backstreets* #32, we reported the participation of Randy Jackson, Jeff Porcaro and Roy Bittan, and the recording of the song "Just Another Roll of the Dice," which we now know as "Roll of the Dice." In *Backstreets* #34/35, we detailed Sam Moore's involvement and confirmed the basic line-up of Porcaro, Jackson and Bittan for *Human Touch*. By *Backstreets* #36, we added Mark Isham and Bobby King to the list of musicians, as well as another title, "Man's Job." And in *Backstreets* #37, we revealed David Sancious' return and the recording of "Pony Boy."

Other musicians on *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town* you might not be familiar with are the rhythm section of Kurt Wortman (drums) and Doug Lunn (bass), members of Mark Isham's band who join him in backing Bruce on "With Every Wish." Previous studio credits for guitarist Tim Pierce, who plays on "Soul Driver" and "Roll of the Dice," include work with Tom Waits. Ian McLagen and Bob Glaub worked with Springsteen previously on the "Viva Las Vegas" single, while backup singers Soozie Tyrell and Lisa Lowell rejoin Patti Scialfa to form the same trio that backed Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes on tour in the early '80s, notably appearing on the live *Reach Up and Touch the Sky* album. Drummer Gary Mallaber is best known for his work with Bonnie Raitt.

Shane Fontayne and Bruce on Saturday Night Live.

With the release of the "Human Touch" single, many fans were surprised that for the first time since the release of the "Badlands" single, Bruce didn't offer fans a non-LP B-side, instead opting to back "Human Touch" with "Better Days." And it wasn't for lack of material. At least two extra songs are known to have been recorded during the *Human Touch* sessions: "Trouble River" and "Thirty Days Out." It has been suggested that the two songs (along with "Part Man, Part Monkey") were part of an earlier single disc release, scrapped in favor of the two newly configured records. Add to that list "When the Lights Go Out" and "Red Headed Woman," songs likely recorded, as they were appealing enough to Bruce to be included in both Christic shows, and you've got plenty of material for B-sides.

By the official release date of March 31, rumors were already raging concerning a tour. Unlike the *Tunnel of Love Express* tour, which wasn't announced or even assumed until months after the release of the record, a 1992 tour in support of the records was acknowledged in the original press statement announcing their release. Bruce was quoted as saying, "I'm excited about being finished and am looking forward to getting out on the road."

At press time, the tour looked as though it would begin in Europe with two nights in Stockholm, June 15 and 17. Other dates penciled in include June 20 and 21 in Milan, Italy; Frankfurt, Germany on June 25 and 26; June 29 and 30 in Paris; and five nights at London's Wembley Arena in early July.

With Europe finished, the tour would start in the U.S. sometime in August, hitting major sheds (summer-only outdoor venues that combine reserved seating with festival-seating lawns) and arenas across the country. In an unprecedented move, a second, more extensive tour of Europe after the US tour appears likely. In 1981 and 1985, Springsteen toured North America a second time after tours of Europe. This time, the opposite appears likely.

Surely, 1992 is going to be Bruce's busiest year since 1988. Along with the expected *Rolling Stone* interview, there has been talk of a full length *Playboy* interview, and further coverage from MTV, *People* and *Musician*. Word from Great Britain suggests that Sony has already arranged a full-length print interview to coincide with tour announcements there.

But the climate has changed from 1988 and 1985. Despite Columbia's efforts to avoid hyping Bruce's new records, it isn't easy to inconspicuously release 24 new songs and hit the road with a new band for the first time in 19 years. Bruce will be under the microscope.

Hopefully neither Columbia nor the Springsteen camp is worried about reaching *Born in the USA* status again, but as Bruce himself told *Rolling Stone* in 1988, "I wouldn't mind having another big record like that. But my main concern is writing that new song that has that new idea . . . .To me, that is the essence of my job. Also, you want to rock people. That's my job, too." By releasing two separate records, perhaps Springsteen can accomplish both goals. His core audience remains, but it is the media, more concerned with dollar grosses than with critical acceptance, that will brand Bruce a musician on the wane or a superstar reclaiming his crown. Hopefully, the music will be allowed to do the talking.

—Erik Flannigan and Jonathan B. Pont

NOLIPS

BACK IN THE PARK: One rumor that actively circulated concerned a possible appearance by Bruce Springsteen at a free concert in New York's Central Park. According to an article in the *New York Daily News*, an HBO publicist said that Springsteen and management were ensconced in discussions with the city's Parks Department and with HBO, but a Sony spokesperson denied that talks were taking place. HBO would televise the show live and bankroll the event, making a $250,000 donation to the Parks Department to defray city costs. Nothing further appeared in print, but given the potential size and magnitude of this event, we think that it was nothing more than wishful thinking on the part of a few individuals. . . Several enterprising individuals in Great Britain found themselves in hot water in January after going public with a scheme to sell tickets to a bogus Springsteen show. Advertisements placed Springsteen in Devon, West Lothian, and Sheffield, and halls had in fact been booked by the phony promoters. People who responded to the ads were told that only checks and money orders would be accepted and that they would have to apply for tickets within 12 hours. Nottinghamshire Police broke up the ring and arrested one man on charges of fraud while questioning at least ten other people. . .Sen. Bob Kerrey (D-NE.) began his Presidential bid by playing "Born to Run" at his kick-off rally. When he became the third candidate to drop out of the campaign, he sang the chorus of "No Surrender" at the press conference. Looks like we'll all be singing "The Price You Pay" come next January 20 . . . Listening parties for *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town* were held in several places well ahead of the March 31 release date. The first, on January 30 in New Orleans, was thrown by Jon Landau for Sony executives and was followed by a dinner that Springsteen himself attended. Landau hosted another party a week later for industry insiders in London at the Dorchester Hotel. Subsequent listenings were held for the British media. Although parties were scheduled by Columbia/Sony in Atlanta, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Seattle, they were canceled at the last minute. WNEW-FM in New York hosted a listening party of their own at the Bottom Line for lucky listeners who won tickets through a contest. It wouldn't be the first time Springsteen's music has blasted within those hallowed walls.

ALL THE PROMISES: State Senator Milton Marks of San Francisco has asked California Attorney General Dan Lungren to investigate whether Ticketmaster has violated that state's antitrust laws. Due simply to a lack of competition, concertgoers in most areas throughout the country must buy their tickets through Ticketmaster. Central to the investigation in the Golden State is the "convenience fee" or service charge that Ticketmaster charges customers, often inflating the face value by as much as $4.25 for bigger acts. A bill now before the state legislature in California would limit the service charge to 15 percent of the ticket's value. A similar bill, SB 712, would have outlawed scalping of tickets. This bill, sponsored by State Senator William Lockyer, did not survive, but could be reintroduced if there is enough grassroots support for it. We urge our readers to write their elected officials regarding these bills and others. . .A recent poll in *Esquire* magazine, the noted rock 'n' roll journal, found that "Born in the USA" ranks as the worst rock 'n' roll song of all time with the nation's college students. We think that means tickets will be easier to come by this time around.

ON E STREET: The members of the E Street Band have been keeping busy as of late. Nils Lofgren and Roy Bittan played at the Farm Aid benefit in March, the former with Neil Young and the latter with Tracy Chapman. Lofgren also appeared in January on National Public Radio's *Mountain Stage*, a weekly music program that originates in Charleston, West Virginia. Bittan appears on Chapman's new album, *Matters of the Heart*. Furthermore, there has been speculation that Bittan will be on the Springsteen tour. Clarence Clemons, meanwhile, celebrated his 50th birthday in January with a pair of shows at the Sweetwater, a tiny club in Mill Valley, California. The Big Man stood at the door as the patrons departed to chat and offer his thanks. Meanwhile, he toured in Europe with German musician Peter Maffay in late winter. . .Steve Van Zandt announced that his next project will steer clear of politics and that he wants to "have some fun" with the next album. He told a group of fans that it should be out by the end of this year. Steve did make an appearance at the Grammy Awards in New York with Band co-founder Robbie Robertson to present the award for Best Heavy Metal album. . .Mighty Max Weinberg appeared on *The Dennis Miller Show* on March 24. . . Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes embarked on an extensive European tour at the end of February. In just over a month, the Jukes had scheduled 29 shows in 12 countries. Reports were enthusiastic to say the least, with Southside and the Jukes turning in two and a half hour shows that include about 30 songs, including covers like "Little Queenie" and "Crying," as well as older Jukes standards and most of the material from *Better Days* as well. Southside was touring the west coast at press time.

A sign of the times, perhaps?

DANCING IN THE DARK: Italian fans got quite a treat recently when Sony music reps decided to debut the video for "Human Touch" in open air plazas. Using a big-screen that was moved from square to square, the video was previewed in several different locations before the Italian TV premiere March 10. In Milan, for example, three screenings were shown, including one at Castello Sforzesco, an old castle. The evening screening sounded particularly attractive to us: nothing quite like a new Bruce video, a sunset, and a cappuccino. . .

STOP PRESS

The tour dates that had been announced at press time are included below. Call the hotline for information on shows in other cities.

Stockholm, June 15,17
Frankfurt, June 25, 26
Paris,June 29, 30
Barcelona, July 2, 3
London, July 6, 9, 10, 12, 13
E. Rutherford, July 23, 25, 26, 28, 30
Worcester, MA.August 13, 14
Detroit, MI August 17, 18
Cleveland, August 21, 22
Landover, August 25, 26
Philadelphia, August 28, 29.

PERFORMANCE

First Club Show of '92 With the Iguanas

Bruce Jams in New Orleans

In the past year Bruce Springsteen's legendary habit of dropping in and jamming with bands in small clubs has been less evident: in 1991, Bruce jammed in a club or made a guest appearances only six times. But if Bruce's performance early in February is any sign of things to come, 1992 looks to be an exciting year.

This time around it was a small bar in New Orleans rather than the Stone Pony that Bruce paid a visit to. The date was Sunday, February 2, and the place was the Maple Leaf Bar and Grill in New Orleans' Uptown neighborhood, an area more popular with locals than tourists. Bruce was in town to shoot the "Human Touch" video on the St. Charles streetcar line and to premiere his forthcoming albums for Sony executives at an advance listening party. But in between hanging out with the honchos at Sony and taking his shirt off for the video, Bruce found time to jam with the Iguanas at the Maple Leaf.

As Derek Huston, a sax player in the band tells it, Bruce and Patti dropped by the club more to enjoy the music than to jam. "I didn't see him until we started playing when he was out there dancing with Patti," Huston said by telephone the other day. "They were just hanging out at the bar and taking it easy. People in New Orleans are pretty laid back with celebrities and they don't bug them too much. But he was going out on the dance floor and even during the ballads he was dancing with Patti. It seemed that if he was hanging around, he was enjoying it."

Seeing Bruce Springsteen in the audience got the band thinking and during their set break the group's baritone player, Joe Cabral, went up to the bar and asked for a shot of tequila with salt. "Bruce has the salt," the bartender joked, so the gregarious Joe went up and started talking with the Boss. Cabral hails from Nebraska so the first topic he brought up was Springsteen's 1982 solo album. Once the ice was broken, Cabral asked Bruce if he wanted to join in on a few songs and the Boss said yes.

"We started talking about what songs we'd do," Huston said. "I met Bruce and Patti at that point and they were both real friendly, sweet people, big smiles, real unassuming, real down to earth, nice folks. We came up with a couple of the songs." Huston also asked Scialfa if she wanted to join in but she declined.

When the band asked Bruce how he wanted to be introduced, the Boss said "don't say nothing." So the band decided to come up with a pseudonym, and told Bruce they would ask for Louie La Scalla. "We did a couple of songs," Huston continued, "and then Joe came up to the mike and said, 'hey Louie.' They were close enough he was able to snake his way on up through the people and got on up with us."

The first song the band tackled was "Ain't That a Shame" by Fats Domino. Springsteen sang on this number and since he was more familiar with the tune than the band members (who had never actually played the song before), Springsteen led. For the next number, "Save the Last Dance For Me," Springsteen picked up a guitar from the stage and started playing. Rod Hodges, the Iguanas guitar player picked up an accordion and the song began. "I thought Bruce sang that song beautifully," said Huston.

The third number was an obscure Chuck Berry cover called "Betty Jean." Huston says the band originally suggested "Nadine" but Bruce nixed it, saying there were too many words. "He played it as an extended rocker," said Huston, "and he let everyone else have solos. It's nice to hear him play guitar again because I know he always hires a guy in his band to help onstage. But he plays real crunchy guitar. He really makes the thing talk. He doesn't have any fancy licks or anything but he really tilts it out of the guitar."

CHERYL GERBER PHOTO

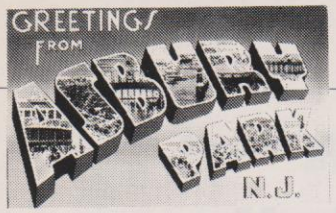
Bruce Springsteen jams at the Maple Leaf on February 2, 1992.

After the third tune, Springsteen stepped down from the stage to take a breather. "Though we only did three songs he allowed everyone to do solos and stuff so it lasted a long time," said Huston. "Then he stepped down and went around the corner to relax. I gave my girlfriend one of the band's t-shirts to put on and he put it on. And he was happy to have a dry shirt on and he seemed to be enjoying himself."

The band ended their show soon after Springsteen's guest spot and Bruce hung around and talked to several patrons. Huston said both Bruce and Patti were very relaxed and informal and seemed to enjoy themselves. The only trappings of Springsteen's stardom came from a couple of bodyguard-types and when one of Springsteen's people told a local photographer not to take pictures or Bruce would leave. She continued taking photos and Bruce did not leave and even posed with the band after their show. "He didn't seem to have a problem with pictures and he posed for them," said Huston.

While many of Springsteen's jam sessions in the past have been with up and coming local bands, the Iguanas are a band with a growing national following. The group is signed to a division of MCA Records and has a record due out this year. They tour all over the nation but try to regularly play in local clubs like the Maple Leaf. And though the band played major shows like the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival and appeared on National Public Radio's Mountain Stage show, Huston says the night they jammed with Bruce Springsteen stands out as the high point of their career so far. "We've had a lot of neat things happen to the band so far but he's definitely a superstar and it was a great experience because it was such a natural thing. He's very unassuming and it was just like a guy who really knew how to rock 'n' roll getting up there and we did it. It was only particularly exciting because of who he was and because he was so great about it. He's a great guy. He makes it easy for all the musicians to follow what he's doing." Maybe Springsteen should look no further than New Orleans for a band for the upcoming tour.

—Charles R. Cross



Stone Pony Still in Limbo

Summer's Here and the Time is Right. . .

By Robert Santelli

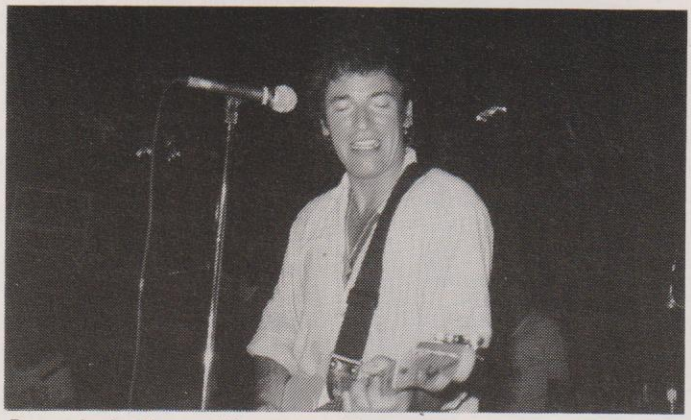
In the past, whenever Bruce Springsteen was about to release a new album, the anticipation and excitement at the Jersey shore was so thick you could practically cut it with a knife. With the Boss's recent release of *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town*, his first records in nearly five years, you would have thought that two new albums would have meant double the emotional build-up.

Not so. In fact, there was an eerie apathy that flowed through the air in such Shore towns and traditionally hard-core Springsteen haunts as Belmar, Bradley Beach, Asbury Park, and Long Branch just prior to the albums' release. The reason was easy enough to figure out: this marked the first time that Springsteen released new music as a full-time California resident, rather than a Jersey homeboy.

Add to that the fact that an overwhelming majority of Shore Springsteen fans were still disturbed by the Boss's decision not to use the E Street band on the recordings and ensuing tour, and you have a case, where, for the very first time in Springsteen's 20 year plus career, serious cracks have appeared in his once rock-solid Shore base.

"It's not the same Springsteen living in California," said one Shore fan the first day the albums hit the stores. "I think we always thought we had this special relationship with the guy, you know, that he kind of represented us in the rock world or something. But that's pretty much history. He still may make great music, but he's just another rock star to me now."

Springsteen still has a home in Rumson, the exclusive Shore community ten or so miles north of Asbury Park. But according to Springsteen fans who make it a habit of riding by it, neither he nor his family has been there for any extended period since last fall.



Remembering those wild summer nights. . .

BERNIE RANNELLONE PHOTO

"In the old days, it would always be around this time that the rumors would start," said another local Springsteen fan, Ron Wyas. "Maybe Bruce is going to jam tonight or tomorrow night or whatever. But with him out on the West Coast and the Stone Pony closed, it seems like the chances of that happening again are pretty remote."

Actually, the lack of Springsteen hoopla was just one more indication of what turned out to be a particularly dull winter at the Shore. Clubs such as the Fast Lane II in Asbury Park, the Tradewinds in Sea Bright, and Jason's in South Belmar, continued to bring in top names in rock and blues. But the recession and the irregular presence of artists like John Eddie, Bobby Bandiera (who has been in Europe with Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes), and the Red House, plus the absence of any new bands capable of causing a big stir, was enough to put the local scene into something of a slump.

Yet, with the onset of summer, things do heat up at the Shore. For starters, the debut album from the Shore group Mr. Reality ought to be out in June. Word has it that another local outfit, the Outcry, recently signed a recording contract with CBS/Sony. The Downtown Tangiers Band, led by Bill Chinnock and former E Street Band keyboard player Danny Federici, is planning Shore shows this summer. And negotiations once again have begun to establish renovation for both the Paramount Theatre and Convention Hall, Asbury Park's two boardwalk venues.

The Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank is also set to begin planning for a massive facelift. It recently received a $2.2 million grant from the state of New Jersey for renovation purposes that might well make it the premiere theater concert hall in Central and South Jersey. And finally, there is talk for the umpteenth time, about the possible purchase of the Stone Pony and the eventual re-opening of the club, perhaps as soon as later this summer.

According to Lee Mrowicki, the club's former spokesman and popular DJ, there is a real chance the club can be saved. "We're all keeping our fingers crossed," said Mrowicki. "We have people who are serious about making the Pony the club that it once was. We'll just have to see if things work out."

In the meantime, the Jersey Shore Jazz and Blues Foundation has announced that it plans to honor gospel great Cissy Houston with its second Lifetime Achievement Award at the Fifth Annual Jersey Shore Jazz and Blues Festival May 15-17 at Marine Park in Red Bank. Houston, the mother of pop singer Whitney Houston, leads the Newark-based New Hope Baptist Church Choir, which, at press time, was scheduled to sing at the festival.

Other scheduled performers at the free outdoor event, which is predicted to draw upwards of 75,000 people and may be the Shore concert of the summer, include last year's Lifetime Achievement Award winner, jazz guitarist Tal Farlow, plus blues artists Johnny Copeland, Bobby Radcliff, the Nighthawks, the Fairlanes, jazz artists Kenny Davern, the Brookdale Big Band, Glenn Alexander, the Chico Rouse, Jr. Quartet, and some 15 other acts.

Shore tidbits. . . . Steve Van Zandt fans should pick up the self-titled debut album from the Arc Angels, an Austin, Texas-based band that includes the rhythm section from the late Stevie Ray Vaughan's Double Trouble (drummer Chris Layton and bass player Tommy Shannon) plus guitarists Charlie Sexton and Doyle Bramhall II. The album was produced by Van Zandt and it has a distinct Rolling Stones-style sound to it. Van Zandt also says he's planning a new album of his own, which he'll begin recording this summer. . . . Hats off to rock journalist Bob Makin for his fine four-part series on the history of the Jersey Shore music scene that ran in recent issues of the New Jersey rock weekly, *EC Rocker*. Copies of those pieces are available by writing the magazine at 7 Oak Place, Montclair, NJ 07042 or by calling (201) 783-4346. . . .No word yet on when Elektra Records will finally release John Eddie's third album. . . . Bill Chinnock has brought back to life his North Country Records and plans to release his classic late '70s album, *Dime Store Heroes*, on compact disc. Chinnock has also been writing new songs with members of the Doobie Brothers.

17 Years Later, Bruce Launches New Band in Old Haunt

Live at the Bottom Line, Deja Vu

Seventeen years after he set the world on fire with what have been called the most important shows of his career, Bruce Springsteen returned to the scene on May 6 and played an unannounced private concert at the tiny Bottom Line in New York City. Like his famous 1975 appearances there, expectations were high as Springsteen premiered his new band and gave the material off his two new albums its first public airing.

But unlike 1975 when Bruce performed "without fear," as one observer noted, the 1992 show found Bruce and band cautious. And perhaps the biggest difference was how Bruce's hardcore fans felt about the concert: the show was a private party for Sony executives and organizers refused to let in the small crowd of 50 fans who patiently waited outside. Springsteen may not have been aware of the decision, but many were left wondering if Bruce remembered his pledge back in 1975 to never play industry-only functions.

For the Sony brass who got in the club, the big news was the new musicians playing behind the Boss. Springsteen used the performance as a warm-up for his *Saturday Night Live* gig and to try out his new band with a live audience. Bruce started by saying, "We've only been together for two weeks. That's my only disclaimer."

Bruce pointed at a picture of himself on the wall from 1975 and said, "I look the same. How come you guys look older?" He joked with one table, "weren't you guys here 17 years ago?"

Of the band members, only Bruce and Roy Bittan were there 17 years ago. The new line up included singer Bobby King, who contributed backup vocals to *Human Touch* (though King may not play all dates on the tour); all the other members were hired during April auditions. Guitar player Shane Fontayne has played with Steve Forbert and Lone Justice. Bass player Tommy Simms is a Nashville session player, while drummer Zachary Alford has toured with the B-52s and Gang of Four.

5/6/92
The Bottom Line
New York, NY
- **Better Days**
- **Local Hero**
- **Lucky Town**
- **If I Should Fall**
- **57 Channels**
- **Big Muddy**
- **Living Proof**
- **My Beautiful Reward**
- **Leap of Faith**
- **Man's Job**
- **Roll of the Dice**
- **Real World**

Encores:
- **Human Touch**
- **I Wish I Were Blind**

Patti Scialfa was at the show and could be seen on the side of the stage, but a source said that she is not in the touring band, though she may make an occasional guest appearance.

The show opened with "Better Days" and was followed by a quick succession of songs from the two new albums. Introductions were short and few. Before "57 Channels," tapes of the Los Angeles riots came over the sound system, then Bruce launched into a more serious version of the song.

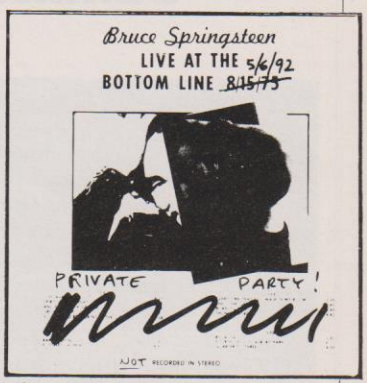
The biggest response of the night from the industry crowd came from "Living Proof" and "Leap of Faith." "My Beautiful Reward" was the only song done acoustically, and Springsteen noted that his voice had already been strained by "Living Proof." At the introduction of "Roll of the Dice," Springsteen and band played the snippet of the Rolling Stones' "Gimme Shelter" which frequently popped up during his tours in the '80s. Bruce used a guitar tuning box and joked that "even with this idiot box," he still couldn't keep his guitar in tune. The *Daily News* reported Springsteen was "nervous at first, but regained his instincts quickly."

After the show, Bruce hung out in front of the stage and signed autographs for the Columbia employees. Before anyone had a chance to ask Springsteen the big question, he offered it up: "Yeah, I'm going on tour," he said. After the show, Bruce was wearing his "Model A" shirt, the same one he wears on the *Lucky Town* album cover.

The official explanation for the show was that "Bruce wanted to run through the new band with a larger audience before *'Saturday Night Live*. Three buses carried employees to the club from the Sony office and a few other invited guests straggled in. The only ex-E Streeter seen in the crowd was Little Steven Van Zandt. When a fan asked Steven about help in getting into the club Steve commented, "I've got nothing to do with this. I was told I could bring one guest myself." One Columbia employee who got into the hall described the security as "absolutely a military style organization." The Bottom Line told everyone who asked that the hall was rented for a private bar mitzvah.

By show time at 8:45, less than 50 fans had gathered outside the club. They were told that the show was invitation-only. When it became obvious that the hall would not be completely jammed and could fit them, fans again asked if it would be possible for them to stand in back and see the show. They were emphatically told "no" and informed by the Bottom Line door people that they had orders from Springsteen's organization to only let in people who were on the guest list. *The News* estimated that 260 people attended the show (and there were 50 no shows) and many of the guests left early, which increased the frustration of those waiting outside.

Eventually Alan Pepper, the owner of the club, came out and addressed the 30 hardcore fans,



who remained outside the hall trying to hear through the wall, and apologized. "If it were up to us, we'd let you in, but tonight we have nothing to do with this," he said. "We rented the hall out and we're not controlling the door." Several fans who were forced to listen from across the street, expressed great bitterness that Springsteen's organization did not allow them into the hall, even though there was plenty of room. "It wasn't like there was a mob or anything," said one fan who waited for five hours. "There were at most 30 people and they were very orderly. The place was half empty. It was ridiculous and hurtful." To quell criticism, sources say a similar fan-only show or a live broadcast may be in the works.

In 1975, after playing to an industry-only crowd in Los Angeles, Springsteen complained to reporters that he never again wanted to play to an industry audience since record people don't respond to his show the way his fans did. The next night he made his famous comments at the Roxy that he would never again do exclusive shows without his fans. "I don't play no private parties," he said at the time.

The concert ended early with Bruce finishing the last of the encores at 10:10. About 10:15, one couple walked up to the nearly empty hall and announced to the stunned doorman, "We're on the guest list." One fan still there waiting in the cold, told them to try again in 17 years.

—Charles R. Cross

Bruce's First Live Television Appearance

Live on Saturday Night

It sounded like an April Fools joke when the *Saturday Night Live* announcer said the words, "special musical guest, Bruce Springsteen." But the date was May 9, a month after April Fools and it wasn't a joke. Springsteen, who has in the past shied away from television appearances more than he ran from the nuns in parochial school, shifted gears and appeared on the program showcasing his new band. Overnight ratings indicated that the program would be one of the highest rated weeks in the show's long history.

Springsteen played three songs, an honor the producers have only allowed a handful of artists. Wearing his "Model B" shirt shirt (see cover of *Backstreets* #32), he at first seemed tense but soon loosened up and dug into the performance with some furious guitar playing, not equaled on stage since the *Darkness* tour.

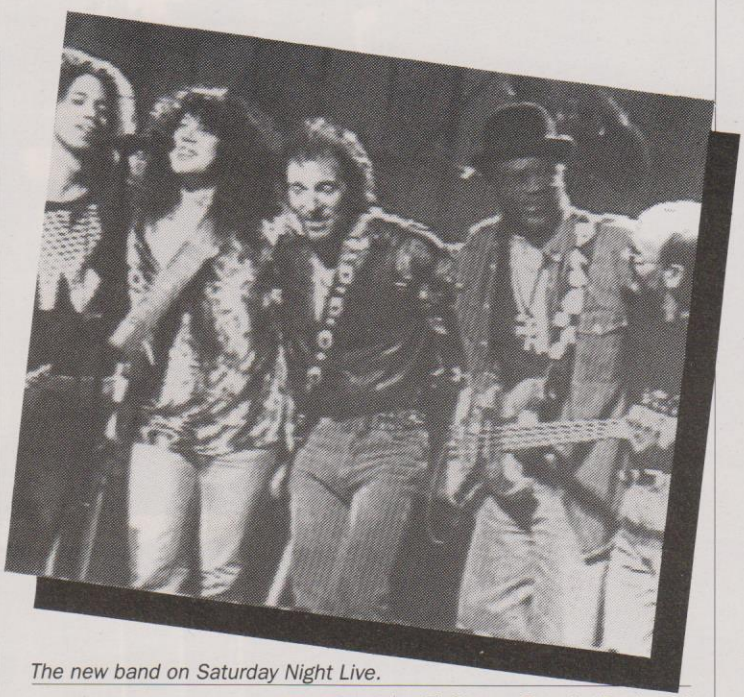
The band started with "Lucky Town" and played a live version of this song that was more than a minute longer than the album cut, due to Springsteen's extended guitar jam. Bruce played very near both new guitarist Shane Fontayne and bass player Tommy Simms, and at times even ran into them. Though he over sang this first song slightly, it was a rousing and spontaneous performance.

After a break and a several skits, Springsteen and band came back and did the new single "57 Channels," in a similar version to that first attempted at the Bottom Line show. The song began with tapes of the riots and some of George Bush's rhetoric. It was experimental and risky but the results were mixed: Where the song was fun and warm at the Christic Show, this new arrangement attempts to politicize a song that seems more like a lark.

Bruce ended with a tremendous "Living Proof," the highlight of the night. Playing crunchy guitar solos, stomping his feet on the stage, and swinging his Fender like he used to in the old days, Springsteen put all of himself into this song. His singing was flawless and even if the band seemed tentative (he turned to the drummer to make sure he knew when to end it), Bruce's confidence was obvious: He looked like he was back at the Upstage leading a band he'd never worked with before through a few numbers. One member of the audience described the band as "he's got a bunch of young hungry six-gun renegades behind him."

Springsteen ended "Living Proof" with his trademark jump and received a standing ovation. Stepping to the mike, he shocked the audience by saying, "See you this summer." It is highly unusual for musical guests on the show to ever speak, much more for them to plug an upcoming concert tour. Springsteen joined host Tom Hanks and guest Jay Leno at the end of the show for the obligatory credits roll, and he exchanged hugs with the cast. Bruce did not perform on any skits in the show.

The song selection for the appearance was a surprise as sources within CBS had been reporting all week that the songs were to be "Better Days," "57 Channels," and "Local Hero." At the Thursday rehearsal, Springsteen and band performed the three songs twice and he joked with the audience. At the dress rehearsal earlier in the day on Saturday, Bruce and band performed the three songs and Springsteen was more animated as he even threw kisses to the crowd. During the second musicial segment of the dress rehearsal, Springsteen changed his shirt and came out wearing a French sailor's top with black stripes. Celebrities in the audience included Mariah Carey, Sarah Jessica Parker, and Paul Simon. Producer Lorne Michaels told one reporter that the show had tried for years to get Springsteen to appear on the program.



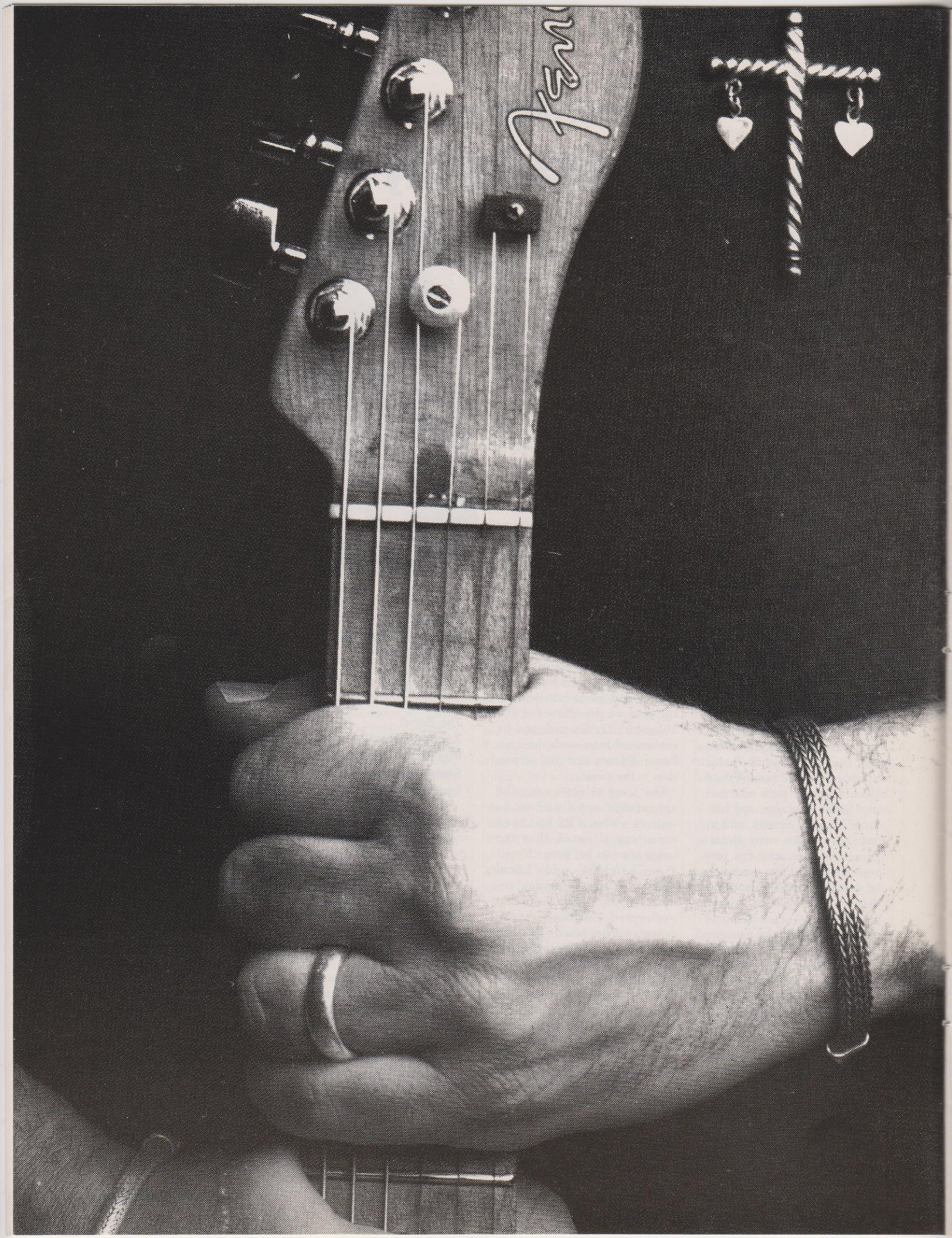
The new band on Saturday Night Live.

5/9/92
Saturday Night Live
•Lucky Town
•57 Channels
•Living Proof

The Band:
Zachary Alford, drums
Roy Bittan, keyboards
Shane Fontayne, guitar
Tommy Simms, bass

Ironically, it was also NBC that offered Springsteen $1 million dollars in 1976 to perform in an hour long television special. Dylan had turned down a planned televised concert at the last minute and an offer went out to the Boss. Springsteen turned that offer down as he did all others that followed. But Springsteen's opinion of television seems to be changing. The same week as his performance on *Saturday Night Live*, Springsteen taped an MTV interview with Kurt Loder which MTV broadcast over a week of *The Day in Rock* segments. Bruce gave Loder his first official explanation for the break-up of the E Street Band: "I played with the E Street Band, some of the guys, since we were 18-years-old," Springsteen told MTV. "I think I got to this place, like at the end of the *Born in the USA* tour, like we'd finished something, somehow. And I'd started to experiment, recording by myself sometimes. I did the *Tunnel of Love* record like that, I did *Nebraska* like that. Really during most of the '80s, I guess *Born in the USA* was the record I'd recorded with the band, as it was. I felt like I'd gone a long time playing with the same people and I hadn't had a chance to go out and see what other people could bring to what I was doing. I think you've got some responsibility to try and step out a bit. It was very, very frightening."

Springsteen also discussed his new band, describing their "spirit." "It's funny because I believe there's something to that whole idea that someone brings their spirit in with them," he told Loder. "Because I think before I heard any of these guys play, I said 'that,' when these guys came into the room. It was just a feeling. They played great." —*Charles R. Cross*



MY SECRET NAME

BY CHARLES R. CROSS

In a small midwestern town in late 1980, Bruce Springsteen ran down the street in a hurry, routinely late for an interview with a journalist. Wearing a ratty hooded sweatshirt beneath a leather jacket, he walked into a supermarket and came out with his arms full of snack foods: a package of Twinkies, some Drake's Cakes, some Parkerhouse rolls, and a bag of Lay's potato chips. It was dinner.

A couple of months later on *The River* tour, a writer from *Melody Maker* asked Springsteen if he felt like a grown up. Bruce was 31 at the time but his audience was younger. Bruce smiled and pulled the question back into the confines of his albums, his recorded output, which has always been the vehicle he's used to express feelings about his own life. "*Darkness* was the first album where afterwards I saw myself as a man at last," he said. "I was not a kid anymore." The journalist pressed him, arguing that many of the themes of *The River* were adolescent in nature, dealing with the turmoil of growing up and the search for identity. Since Bruce wasn't a teenager anymore, how could he write from a teenager's point of view? How could Springsteen, who had made adolescent angst an important part of his first few records, continue to keep his audience as he himself aged and matured? How could the guy who wrote "Growin' Up" a dozen years earlier still perform it with such conviction, even when he himself had long ago become an adult?

"I'm not writing for the people I grew up with as a kid anymore," the 1981 model Springsteen said. "They are all married, and have a dog and kids now." He spoke the way Lewis and Clark may have spoken about the Oregon Territory, a land so far away and so remote, it would be hard to even imagine what it might be like.

When Springsteen wrote the last line of "Brilliant Disguise," the most autobiographical song off his ninth album, little did he know how applicable the words would be to his own life: "God have mercy on the man who doubts what he's sure of." When it came to recording the follow-up to *Tunnel of Love*, Springsteen, who has had a history of fighting demons in the recording studio, found himself in a battle with the largest behemoth of his life. It literally took years of struggle in the studio before he conquered it. The final result was two albums of new material and, at least on a personal level, an answer to the question poised by "Brilliant Disguise." "Looking for a little bit of God's mercy, I found living proof," he sings on *Lucky Town,* which makes it sound like he's found an answer to the questions he asked on "Brilliant Disguise."

It did not come easy. Just the numbers behind the making of the two albums are boggling: 24 songs total (*The River* only had 20); four producers; five recording studios; 17 different backing musicians listed on the albums (and at least six other session players have been mentioned as involved in the recording but do not appear on the final albums); even four different photographers to produce the album covers.

But no numbers are more telling than those that describe the length of time it took to produce these two albums: 1642 days between the release of *Tunnel* and the new albums. Springsteen is known for his lengthy recording sessions but this new term sets a record that breaks the long wait between *Born in the USA* and *Tunnel*. Even a lawsuit from Mike Appel that legally precluded Springsteen from recording did not slow his recording process down as much.

While some news of the album sessions has leaked over the past two years, the official word of the new releases did not arrive until January 24, 1992, three and half years after Springsteen's last show with the E Street Band on the Amnesty International Tour. The release listed the songs, gave limited information on the personnel, and quoted Bruce as saying, "I'm excited about being finished and am looking forward to getting out on the road."

More information came from less formal channels. Traveling to New Jersey to attend Patti's high school reunion late last year, Springsteen hung out in the parking lot and told the valets that his new record would come out soon. Though Springsteen has yet to give a formal interview to talk about the process of the recording of the new albums, through a number of different sources a rough history of the making of the albums can be pieced together, much of it based on information Springsteen and Landau provided at the various advance listening parties held in New Orleans, Toronto, London, Norway, and Switzerland to preview the albums.

After the Amnesty tour, Springsteen did something unparalleled in his career: He took an entire year off. That year was filled with much personal change (his divorce, a move to a new house) and with personnel change when he publicly announced he wouldn't be using the E

THE MAKING OF HUMAN TOUCH /LUCKY TOWN

Street Band on his next recording project. During the off year, Landau told Sony executives at the New Orleans listening party, Bruce didn't write songs. It would be one of the few years in Springsteen's life where he wasn't writing, which might be why it took him so long to get back into the swing of things once he began anew.

Work on the new album appears to have begun in late 1989 when Springsteen assembled a group of LA session players to do a cover of "Viva Las Vegas" for a charity album released in the U.K. Things clicked with this group and the first round of sessions were completed with relative ease. Reports from the musicians involved indicate that around 18 songs were cut, and several of those songs are on the released *Human Touch* album.

Considering that Bruce was working with a new group of musicians, the first sessions went well. Early in the project, just as they began recording, Kid Leo told Landau "what you and Bruce need to do with this record is do what you want to do and enjoy doing it." And Landau said that every single day, he and Bruce thought about that advice.

Songwriting, however, did not come as easily for Springsteen as it had in the past and Roy Bittan was brought in when Bruce reported to friends that he "had hit a wall" and was suffering from writer's block. Bittan ultimately contributed to two songs, representing the first time any other player has shared in writing credit on a Springsteen album.

Springsteen and Patti Scialfa with the Swinging Haymakers in New Orleans.

In early 1990, Springsteen thought he had the basic outline of an album together, though this ended up being one of many false alarms. In the meantime Bruce had done several songs for other albums and compilations. He cut two children's songs for the *For Our Children* soundtrack album, and an outtake from that session ended up on *Human Touch*. Bruce contributed vocals to the Southside Johnny album, to Nils Lofgren's "Valentine," and he sang with John Prine on his 1991 release *The Missing Years*. Prine told one reporter that Bruce was amazed when he saw how low budget and simple Prine's studio was (Prine recorded some of his record in a hallway). Springsteen told him that even using the fanciest studios in LA, he couldn't get as good as sound as Prine accomplished with his hallway.

By late 1990, Springsteen had a number of songs he liked and he had achieved a basic sound that he felt was an appropriate follow-up to the E Street Band. But the overall effect still wasn't satisfying to Bruce, so he began asking other musicians into the studio to lay additional tracks on top of what was already recorded. At times, the Bruce Springsteen sessions were the worst kept secret in Los Angeles as a virtual revolving door of musicians were used. Some of these session players reported that they cut their tracks on top of what sounded like finished cuts, while others said Bruce described what he wanted verbally and played them demos. Springsteen was used to recording with a band live in the studio but this process was dramatically different as the albums were built piece by piece. Bittan, Plotkin, Landau and Springsteen all contributed ideas, but no one could figure out how to tie the tracks together into an album with one theme.

Springsteen took a break from recording and used the opportunity of his two Christic Institute Benefit shows to try out some of the new material on an audience. He premiered six songs over the two nights, though only three made it to the final albums. The three cuts that made it onto the records are dramatically different from their live versions, indicating extensive experimentation in the studio.

As Landau reported at the New Orleans listening party, the sessions themselves took many different directions. He said one day the album would all be rockers, and the next day it would be ballads, and that part of the reason he didn't keep the public updated, was because at times neither he nor Bruce knew the direction the material was going. "We didn't want to come out and say anything and then get people disappointed," he was reported to have said.

Work continued throughout 1991, and by the summer Springsteen again thought he had a completed record ready to turn in to CBS. Landau says he knew something was yet to come so he stalled on turning the project in, figuring that Bruce would want to redo it yet again. Driving around Los Angeles in his car, one day Springsteen heard Bob Dylan's "Series of Dreams" from Dylan's *The Bootleg Series* on his car stereo and went through a transformation of sorts: Suddenly he knew he needed one more song to close out the album. Feeling inspired by the recent birth of his son, Springsteen went into his home studio, ostensibly to cut that final track but within two weeks he had written nearly a dozen songs. The first tune he wrote appears to be "Living Proof" and the rest of the *Lucky Town* album followed from there. It had taken Springsteen almost three years to complete the material for *Human Touch* but in just a handful of weeks he finished the entire *Lucky Town* album. Rather than take those songs back into the studio and attempt to re-record them with a full band, Springsteen added a drummer over his drum machine tracks and decided to call it quits. *Lucky Town* is essentially Bruce Springsteen's third solo record, following *Nebraska* and the nearly solo *Tunnel of Love* album.

After struggling for a couple of years to come up with the right material, Springsteen suddenly had more songs than he could ever fit on one album. According to what Landau told CBS executives, neither he nor Springsteen could figure out exactly how to craft one album with the songs they had finished. A double album was considered but according to what Landau suggested, the material did not thematically tie together. A very long single CD was considered but Landau felt the impact would be diminished. Springsteen was impressed by how Guns 'N Roses had successfully released two separate albums at once and he decided to follow suit. Sources within Springsteen's organization argue the idea of two records was a thematic device and not a marketing scheme and the official press release made an effort to distinguish between the two albums, taking pains to call *Human Touch* "his tenth album" and *Lucky Town* "his eleventh album." Sources within Columbia indicate that despite rumors to the contrary, Springsteen still owes CBS another album, but clearly these two new releases bring him that much closer to the point where he can renegotiate.

Springsteen has told friends that around 42 songs were cut for the albums during the lengthy recording process. Slightly more than half of those songs (24) appear on the two records, which is a higher percentage of recorded-to-released material than Springsteen has usually hit (approximately 80 songs were recorded for the 12 cut *Born in the USA* album). Three outtakes have already leaked to collectors, and three other songs were played at the Christic Institute shows, inferring that at least another dozen songs were recorded.

Though commercial and critical reaction to *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town* has been mixed, Springsteen has told several sources he feels the two albums rank with his best material. "I think these are the best records I've ever done," Bruce said at the New Orleans listening party. Though he was enthusiastic about the two new albums, he seemed even more excited to talk about his two kids. "I've got two new babies at home," he told the assembled crowd. "These two babies I'm giving to you. Take good care of them."

EDITORS RANK HUMAN TOUCH /LUCKY TOWN

Rate a Record: "I'll give it an eight, Dick. It's got a great beat and you can dance to it." That's the sort of repartee we all grew up hearing on American Bandstand with cryogenically-preserved host Dick Clark. In light of America's fascination with numerically rating everything from movies to bellyflops at the beach, we asked four of *Backstreets* contributing editors to independently rate each song on the two new albums on a scale of one to ten. In rating these records, we also must note that trying to judge any piece of art on such simplistic terms without description and formal review presents problems—what score would you give the Mona Lisa?—but since critics all over the world had their numerical say (some seem to prefer stars but it's hard to figure out if their scale is four, five or ten stars), we wanted to put our two cents worth in. Also, please note that our editors judged these works within the context of Springsteen's catalog: a song that rated a "one" in Springsteen's catalog might be better than anything in Phil Collins' catalog (and with the possible exception of that one song Tom Cruise had sex on a train listening to, this is probably true). That opinion was expressed by several of our editors who noted that even on the songs they didn't like, and there were plenty, they still thought the music compared well to songs by other artists. But for a new song to rate a "ten" in the context of the Bruce Springsteen catalog, one of our editors noted, "it had to be as good as 'Thunder Road.'" Our four contributors compiled their ratings independently and without discussing their ratings in advance with the other editors. Overall, they were much harder on the new albums than the majority of daily newspaper writers. Surprisingly, the results were nearly identical. To let readers have their say, our next contest asks you to do the same (and for godsakes, don't let our cranky ratings impact your vote): rank each song on both albums on a one to ten scale and come up with your average. Send the results by postcard only (please, save a tree and our machine: NO FAXES!) by July 10, and we'll compile them for an upcoming issue. All entries sent on a postcard are eligible for a random drawing for some super prize as yet to be determined (but we promise that it will be top rate). Send all entries to Rate a Record Contest, Backstreets, PO Box 51225, Seattle, WA 98115.

SONG/STAFFER	CROSS	FLANNIGAN	PONT	ZIMMERMAN	AVERAGE
Human Touch	7	7	8	7	7.25
Soul Driver	9	6	10	9	8.5
57 Channels	9	6	7	8	7.5
Cross My Heart	8	7	9	7	7.75
Gloria's Eyes	4	5	6	5	5
With Every Wish	10	9	5	8	8
Roll of the Dice	4	4	4	9	5.25
Real World	6	6	6	7	6.25
All or Nothing at All	3	3	1	6	3.25
Man's Job	3	8	7	10	7
I Wish I Were Blind	10	9	7	6	8
The Long Goodbye	6	5	5	6	5.5
Real Man	1	2	1	2	1.5
Pony Boy	7	7	9	8	7.75
AVERAGE	**6.2**	**6**	**6**	**7**	**6.3**
Better Days	9	8	6	6	7.25
Lucky Town	10	8	9	8	8.75
Local Hero	8	9	8	7	8
If I Should Fall Behind	7	8	8	8	7.75
Leap of Faith	7	9	8	8	8
Big Muddy	7	6	7	6	6.5
Living Proof	10	7	10	10	9.25
Book of Dreams	8	9	9	7	8.25
Souls of the Departed	5	6	7	7	6.25
My Beautiful Reward	10	10	10	10	10
AVERAGE	**8.1**	**8**	**8.2**	**7.7**	**8**

Those polled include Backstreets Editor Charles R. Cross, Associate Editors Erik Flannigan and Jonathan B. Pont, and Contributor Bob Zimmerman. All were independently polled.

THE HUMAN TOUCH OUTTAKES

HUMAN TOUCH was the first single and the first video from the new album and both were released in early March. The song was most likely written in 1990, though probably late in the sessions since the title had not even been rumored until word of the album titles leaked in early January. The video was filmed in New Orleans in late January and early February and used the St. Charles Street Car line, the oldest continuously operated streetcar in the nation. Many of the interior shots were done in the auditorium of Rabouin School or beneath the porte cochere of the former Stephens Chevrolet on Cardondelet Street. One source says that the idea of appear without a shirt on was Springsteen's. The video was shot by Meirert Avis, who has done several of Springsteen's videos.

In the recording studio, at least one different version of this song was cut since an outtake exists. Despite extraordinary security, a 13 song tape containing alternative versions of many songs on the *Human Touch* album, and three songs not on the album, leaked into the hands of collectors as early as December—almost four months before the record was officially released. By February the tape was common and a Springsteen fanzine called *Murder Incorporated* from Ohio reviewed the outtakes in their early April issue. There has been some speculation that this tape represents the original line-up for *Human Touch*, before Springsteen had been hit with the inspiration that launched the *Lucky Town* album, but that remains unclear. Over 40 songs were recorded, so numerous line-ups for the record could have been considered, and this early tape may be one possible line-up. The outtake tape did not feature "57 Channels," "The Long Goodbye," "Real Man," or "Pony Boy."

The outtake version of "Human Touch" is slightly longer and at 6:41 it runs an extra 13 seconds. The intro to the song is longer with four extra beats before Springsteen begins singing. There is an extra guitar break in the outtake, and the mix sounds different with less vocals and treble on the guitar solo near the end. The drums on the outtake are not quite as crisp, which probably has more to do with mixing and mastering than the recording itself. There is one final officially released version: an edited take of the song was released to radio stations and included on a promo CD shortened to 5:09.

SOUL DRIVER First performed at the second Christic Institute benefit concert on November 17, 1990. This song was one of the earliest Springsteen wrote for the new record and he applied for a copyright for the tune on November 16, 1990 with the Library of Congress. At the time of the Christic show, Roy Bittan was reported to be the co-author of the song in *Billboard*, but surprisingly the version that appears on the album does not credit Bittan. It can be speculated that Bittan helped Springsteen with an early arrangement of the song and that the finished version features a different arrangement, which is why Springsteen no longer credits Bittan for the song.

Even prior to the 13 song *Human Touch* outtake tape, one demo of "Soul Driver" had surfaced back in January of 1991. The original version has a slightly different tempo than later takes and has been described as featuring more of a "reggae feel." Obviously Springsteen experimented extensively with this song since there are four known versions, and all feature slight differences: the Christic acoustic take; the original 1991 demo; the *Human Touch* outtake tape version; and the released album cut. The 1991 demo does not have the distorted guitar solo intro which presumably was done just prior to final mixing. Both outtake versions are shorter than the album cut.

A New York radio station played the 1991 demo on the air in January of 1992, leading to much speculation that Bruce's album was complete and would be released soon. At that point, it was little more than wishful thinking.

57 CHANNELS (AND NOTHIN' ON) First performed at both Christic Institute benefit concerts in November of 1990 and selected as the second single from the albums in the US. The song was first registered with the Library of Congress on December 18, 1990. The Christic Institute version of this song was very different both musically and lyrically from the released version and was 30 seconds longer.

Musically the album version suggests the stark sound of the *Nebraska* record and might offer some insight as to what the songs from that record sounded like in their rock versions. Springsteen is credited as playing bass on this track on the new album liner notes, one of the few times he's credited himself as a bass player (though he does most of the bass parts on the *Lucky Town* album).

There are several lyric changes Springsteen made to the Christic Institute song to clean it up for his new album. At the Christic show Bruce bought a "Hollywood house in them bourgeois hills," but by the album's release he was living in a "bourgeois house in the Hollywood hills." The first verse originally described the upstairs action as "hot and horny," but on the album it was "nice and friendly." The Christic version ended with an additional verse about his "finger trigger" that was deleted from the album. For the last line on the acoustic take, Springsteen transformed the song back to the listener, closing by reminding us "*You're* 57 channels and nothing on." The album ends with Springsteen repeating "57 channels and nothin's on" over the dramatic beat as it fades out. At press time, the single in the US had not been released; a live video was planned and perhaps shot with "Better Days."

CROSS MY HEART Credited to Bruce Springsteen and Sonny Boy Williamson, this is the first time Springsteen has ever put a song on one of his studio albums originally written by another writer. This cover of a classic song "I Cross My Heart" by the late legendary bluesman Williamson, has been revamped by Springsteen but retains the chorus of the original tune. Springsteen has covered numerous songs by other performers and rewritten them to his liking (examples being Chuck Berry's "Johnny Bye Bye" and Jimmy Cliff's "Trapped") but Bruce has always used these songs as B-sides and, before this, never released one on a studio album.

The outtake version of this song has a longer ending and a different guitar solo. The outtake is 4:04 while the released version is only 3:48.

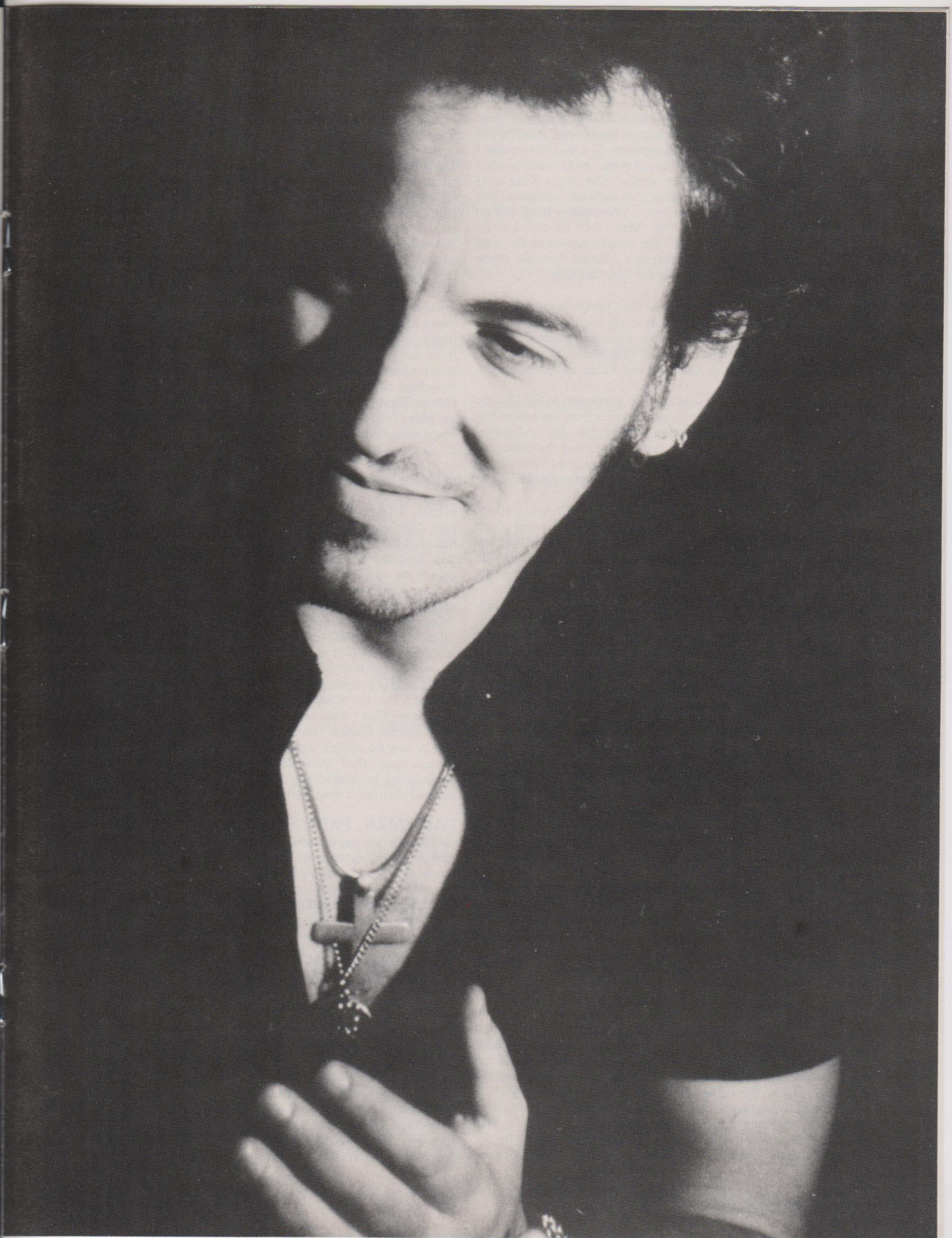
GLORIA'S EYES Included on the outtake tape in a version that sounds similar to the album take. The mix on the outtake tape may be slightly different or the song could have changed in mastering but the changes would be slight. The outtake also has a longer beginning, a longer end, and uses a different guitar solo at the end of the song. The outtake time is 4:08 while the album cut is 3:44.

WITH EVERY WISH This song was one of the first tunes from the sessions that was mentioned in the press, indicating that it probably was one of the first songs recorded. The version of the song on the outtake tape is almost identical to the released cut, another sign that this song was recorded early in the sessions and fine-tuned before the outtake tape leaked.

Trumpet player Mark Isham told the *Asbury Park Press* that he was invited to the sessions by Chuck Plotkin and that Springsteen played him a demo that had been recorded with just his keyboard, guitar and voice. "It was very much a *Nebraska* type vein, and a really beautiful song," Isham said. "He said the rest of the record wasn't quite in the same vein, and he wanted to flesh this tune out a bit." After Isham discussed his part with Bittan and Springsteen, the idea for the drum and bass parts came up and Isham brought in Douglas Lunn and Kurt Wortman, members of his band.

ROLL OF THE DICE Recorded very early during the *Human Touch* sessions and one of the first titles on the record to be reported, then called "Just Another Roll of the Dice." One of the two songs on the album co-written with Roy Bittan. Sources indicate that Bittan came in to help when Bruce "hit a wall" and came up with writer's block. Bobby King said he added his background vocals on this tune early in 1990 and at the time he said he'd contributed to a handful of different songs. King told the *Asbury Park Press* that Plotkin had invited him to the sessions and that he spent five days laying background vocals for four or five songs (he's featured on two songs on the album so either he

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20



THE HUMAN TOUCH OUTTAKES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

was cut from three others or several outtakes with his vocals exist). "He had basically the exact harmonies he wanted me to sing," King said of Springsteen. "It was, 'This is what I want, Bobby.' Bruce knows what he wants." The songs King contributed to included "one ballad that I thought was monstrous. It was a tearjerker." Presumably King was not referring to either "Roll of the Dice" or "Man's Job" but that description would fit "I Wish I Were Blind." The outtake version of this song on the *Human Touch* demos is dramatically different from the album take and includes another 20 seconds of the duet with King.

REAL WORLD First performed at the Christic Institute benefit shows and considered at that point as the inside favorite for the title to the upcoming album. This is one of the two tunes on the record co-written with Roy Bittan. According to a report first mentioned in *Billboard* in 1990, Springsteen wrote all the lyrics and Bittan contributed to the music.

Of the several tunes that Springsteen first performed at the Christic Institute show, none was as dramatically changed from the acoustic to album versions as this tune. The acoustic version was slow and sparse, while the album version features a faster tempo and Springsteen's singing is less strained. Even with the tempo change, the Christic Institute version of this song was actually 30 seconds shorter than the album take.

Three versions of this song are known to exist: The Christic Institute acoustic take; the *Human Touch* demo version; and the released album cut. On the outtake cut, Sam Moore comes into the song sooner and Moore's vocals are more prominent throughout. The outtake ends with Moore and Springsteen trading vocals for another 20 seconds of the song before it fades out.

At the Sony listening party for the album in New Orleans, Springsteen noted that Moore's singing on the album had served as an inspiration to him. He said that after hearing the power of Moore's voice, he'd felt intimidated and had decided to re-cut some of his own vocals which may explain some of the differences between the vocals on the outtake tape and the final album release.

ALL OR NOTHIN' AT ALL The outtake is 36 seconds longer than the released song. It features an extended introduction and a longer ending.

MAN'S JOB Dramatically different on the outtake tape than on the finished album. The outtake version includes more vocals from both Sam Moore and Bobby King, and less from Bruce. On the released version, those contributing singers have been diminished and Bruce's voice has been upped in the mix. Bruce's vocals may have been redone after the original recording was completed and added later. The album version take is ten seconds longer than the outtake.

Strangely, "Man's Job" does bear some thematic and lyric comparisons to an early *River*-era outtake called "Doll's House." The chorus of that song was different (and went "I'm living in a doll's house") but the first four lines of the two songs are the same and the music is very similar. Springsteen has been known to save ideas for years from unreleased songs and to reprise them later in new songs, and this is a dramatic instance of that practice.

I WISH I WERE BLIND The outtake version of this song is a minute longer than the released version and features a different vocal and a different guitar solo. The album version features a new guitar solo near the end. The outtake has more of the duet between Bruce and Bobby Hatfield which continues on for another 20 seconds after the album version fades. The outtake is 5:28 while the album cut is 4:45.

Hatfield told the *Asbury Park Press* that he only does limited session work but couldn't turn down an invitation from the Boss. He said Springsteen discussed the old "Shindig years" when the Righteous Brothers frequently appeared on the popular television show (incidentally, these old Shindigs are now available on home video from Rhino). "We talked mainly rhythm and blues," Hatfield said. When it came time to cut his vocals Hatfield said he had trouble keeping up with Bruce's phrasing but after a little work they got it together. "His intonation is a little difficult. . . It took a bit of practice."

THE LONG GOODBYE This song was not on the original outtake tape of *Human Touch* leading to some speculation that it was written towards the end of the sessions or that it was a last minute substitution. One source says that the music on this song resembles the original take of "Born in the USA" that was first written around the time of the *Nebraska* album. This original "Born in the USA," along with an early take of "Downbound Train," differed dramatically from the anthematic rock versions heard on the album *Born in the USA*. Though these outtake versions have never been widely circulated, they reportedly sound rawer and harder than the album versions, and according to the source, sound much like "The Long Goodbye." In 1982, when Springsteen first began work on his follow-up to *The River*, he was very interested in the blues and rockabilly sound of rockers from the early '50s. This roadhouse blues sound was commercialized and made popular by the recordings of ZZ Top in the '70s and in the sound of retro rockers like George Thorogood. During Springsteen's numerous shows on the Jersey Shore in the early '80s, his own playing suggested this raw, blues-based style, particularly on songs like "On the Prowl," and his cover of ZZ Top's "I'm Bad, I'm Nationwide." That same style of playing can be heard on the solo on "The Long Goodbye," and, according to the source, on the original take of "Born in the USA."

REAL MAN The version of this song on the outtake tape features only slight variations, with the organ moved up in the mix. Since David Sancious only played organ on two songs on the album ("Real Man" and "Soul Driver") one can guess this tune was recorded around the time of the original "Soul Driver" demo probably in 1990 when Sting's tour went through Los Angeles. Sancious first reported his sessions with Bruce in a 1991 *Musician* interview.

Sources also report that "Real Man" suggests an earlier outtake tune called "Fade to Black," which was first written around the time of the early *Born in the USA* sessions.

PONY BOY Springsteen originally recorded this song for the benefit album *For Our Children* but dropped it in favor of "Chicken Lips and Lizard Hips." That original version was described as a duet with Patti, and the *Human Touch* version of the song may indeed be that take or may be another done later in the sessions. In 1971 Springsteen wrote a song called "Pony Child" for his band Doctor Zoom and the Sonic Boom, but considering the big rock sound of that group, the similarity of the titles is most likely coincidence.

PART MAN, PART MONKEY The first non-LP B-side from the album to appear, this song was included on the early outtake tape of *Human Touch*, leading some to speculate it was originally slated for the record. The song is one Bruce first began playing during the *Tunnel of Love* tour, performing it for the first time on February 25, 1988 at the Worcester, MA, opener. The song would remain in the set list for several months before being replaced by "Because the Night" when the tour hit Europe. The outtake tape version of the song is 4:26 long.

TROUBLED RIVER (I CAN'T KEEP FROM CRYING)

One of the three outtake songs on the original *Human Touch* tape and one that harkens back to the sound of *The River*. The song features a searing guitar-solo and a driving beat reminiscent of "Cindy," "Restless Nights" and "Rickie." The outtake tape version of this song is 3:51 long. The *Murder Incorporated* fanzine described this song as "a rocker which includes some excellent guitar playing from Bruce."

30 DAYS OUT The final outtake song and a song that musically fits in better with *Human Touch* than any of Springsteen's previous recordings. The fanzine *Murder Incorporated* called it "a mid-tempo rock song," much like "Roll of the Dice" or "Gloria's Eyes." As it appeared on the outtake tape, this song was 4:30 long.

NOTE: All comments are condensed from longer reviews and at times may not reflect the entire content of the critic's discourse—we suggest you refer to the original review. *CD Review* rated both albums a 9 for sound. Scores have been computed from original star rankings and rounded to closest number though some critics might argue that their four star review does not equal a numerical ten (DeCurtis gave them 4 and 4 1/2 of five); Hilburn 4 each (of four) though on the *Popmeter* chart three weeks later Hilburn rated them 87 and 93; Hinckley 3 and half each (of four); Farber 3 each (of four); Gunderson 3 and 4 (of four); Browne B- and B; Allan 3 and 3 1/2 (of four); Garcia 2 1/2 and 1 1/2 (of four); Hubbard 4 each (of four); Hepworth 5 and 4 (of five); Mayhew 4 each (of four); Kendle 3 and 4 (of five).

THE CRITICS COMMENT

SONG/STAFFER	HUMAN TOUCH	LUCKY TOWN
Rolling Stone **Anthony DeCurtis** "The aesthetic and thematic aims of HT and LT would have been better realized by a single, more carefully shaped collection that eliminated their half-dozen or so least essential songs."	8	9
Los Angeles Times **Robert Hilburn** "Bruce Springsteen gives us one collection to lift our spirits—the energetic HT—and one to touch our hearts, the introspective LT."	10	10
CD Review **Robert Santelli** "Two magnificent works. An amazing portrait of Bruce Springsteen, 1992. *Human Touch* is near masterpiece. It's a work that can stand side by side with *Born to Run* and *Tunnel of Love* and not be caught in their shadow."	9	8
New York Daily News **David Hinckley** "An extremely eclectic package. The mere presence of these records is uplifting. He's given us a lot of good music at a time when we can use it."	9	9
New York Daily News **Jim Farber** "If only Springsteen had indulged in more such personal moments; they ring with intimacy. It's hard to fathom why so eventful a time would result in his least exploratory art."	7	7
USA Today **Edna Gunderson** "Springsteen is trying to find his way out of an identity triangle: who he is, what he once pretended to be and his towering myth."	8	10
Entertainment Weekly **David Browne** "His most confused records since his debut. It's as though his ability to craft a good record has gone the way of his working-class image."	7	8
Indianapolis Star **Marc D. Allan** "Both have moments of brilliance as well as unabashed sentimentality. He shows far more courage than desperation on these discs."	7	9
Tampa Tribune **Wayne Garcia** "HT and LT are mired in confusion and a lack of real growth. The Boss establishes himself as the greatest Springsteen imitator of the 1990s."	6	4
Saint Paul Pioneer Press **Rob Hubbard/Rick Shefchik** "HT: He sounds like he's discovered where he belongs at last. LT: The most confessional album of his career."	10	10
Fresno Bee **Don Mayhew** "He keeps the scope small and looks inward, finding a happy life nevertheless."	10	10
Vox (UK) **Patrick Humphries** "HT: A strange album. By the yard, largely unremarkable rockers. LT: Worth the wait, a mature reflection from a man in love but not at peace."	5	10
Q (UK) **David Hepworth** "The unembarrassable doing what he does best."	10	8
NME (UK) **Stuart Ballie** "HT: A stinker. Masses of extra-indulgent metaphors. It's like he's desperately, painfully trying to remember what he used to be good at."	3	6
Winnipeg Sun **John Kendle** "Life is a constant struggle with one's faith in oneself"	7	8
AVERAGE:	**7.7**	**8.4**

THE CRITICS COMMENT

"The two discs are obviously a bid for attention in a market he hasn't tested in years."

"I'm not sure that Springsteen can afford to make major statements anymore; I'm not sure he can bear anymore the burden of making records that change people's lives or define their musical years."

"Awash in signs and portents of signs to come, what stands out from both albums after several listens is not songs and hooks, but a parade of birds flying over rivers in the rain."

Bruce: born again

The two albums—both of them, like a lot of Springsteen records, out of touch with current rock 'n' roll but in tune with a fable about growing up that Springsteen has been unfolding over several albums—are people by birds (specifically, two bluebirds, a flock of geese, a plain ol' bird, and an unspecified one Springsteen turns into at the very end), rivers (six of them) and rain storms (four).

They signal, over and over again, a time of flight, transition, and rebirth for our hero. . .but they're also somewhat muddied, inconclusive albums in a way Springsteen couldn't have intended. Awash in signs and portents of signs to come, what stands out from both albums after several listens is not songs and hooks, but a parade of birds flying over rivers in the rain.

Matty Karas
Asbury Park Press

Poignant and provocative

Musically, there's nothing on either of the records as immediately grabbing as *Born in the USA's* "Bobby Jean" or *Tunnel of Love's* magnificent "Brilliant Disguise," but both new records are poignant and provocative from the start. There are plenty of smart, radio-ready tracks here, especially in the meaty middle of the disc where the nostalgic "With Every Wish," the infectious, rollicking "Roll of the Dice," and the hope-inspired "Real World" jump out with a 1-2-3 punch. Even the album's low point, "57 Channels (And Nothing On)" sums up one of the key points here, that happiness and satisfaction have to come from within, not without.

David Sofol
Fairfield County Advocate

Needs of maturity

It's a bit difficult to discuss the album Springsteen intended to release by itself, *Human Touch*. What do you do with a record that features one of the most vital rock stars in the world playing in a band with the drummer from Toto? *Lucky Town* is. . .a more interesting beast, primarily because of the potency of the first three numbers. What themes there are on this record—a sort of catholic wonder and love of life (this is Bruce the dad and husband talking) alternating with the usual fears and worries of the characters in Springsteen's ongoing New Jersey gothic—never come alive.

Now, a lot of people think Springsteen is living proof that rock 'n' roll can change to accommodate the needs of a maturing audience that's grown out of a youthful infatuation with dissonance, anger, escape, and protest. It's not that by changing Springsteen has lost his edge or his rock 'n' roll credentials; I understand what he's trying to do and basically I respect it. But nobody could argue that he's doing it well.

Bill Wyman
Chicago Reader

The only explanation

In the years since *Tunnel of Love*, Springsteen's authentic self-examination may have reached a point just short of critical mass; and just short of dying as an artist altogether he had no choice but to shed not only his band and his audience but the weight of his own significance. It's really the only explanation for the decision to release these 24 songs as two separate albums rather than a double, which by its very form would have taken on the dimensions of a major statement, a 70-minute, 16-track CD, assuming Bruce was shrewd enough to let me choose the eight to dump. As a friend pointed out, whereas *The River* took its inspiration from The Clash's *London Calling*, now Springsteen is apparently taking it from Guns 'n Roses, with whom his affinity extends no further than an uncompromising love for rock 'n' roll itself, leaving the two albums to undercut each other artistically and commercially.

You have to assume the control freak has figured this out. I'm not sure that Springsteen can afford to make major statements anymore; I'm not sure he can bear anymore the burden of making records that change people's lives or define their musical years. All he can do now is simply enhance the songbook of one of the three or four most formidable songwriters of the last 20 years with the other-worldly whisper of "Book of Dreams" and the ferocious elegy of "Souls of the Departed. . . ."

Steve Erickson
LA Weekly

Comfort and tenderness

Through most of his earlier albums, Springsteen's vision seemed shaped by the anger and disillusionment he felt as a young man when he saw how those around him often had their aspirations and dreams stripped away by outside forces.

Here, however, he warns that internal forces can be equally damaging, how it is sometimes easier to let the ideal of a better day keep you from making the commitments in your personal life that allow you to open up moments of comfort and joy.

While both albums contain traces of the theme, there is more consistent attention to it in *Lucky Town*, which is why it is the more immediately compelling of the two.

Nothing is more chilling emotionally—or telling thematically—than "Living Proof," a gripping multidimensional song that begins with expressing the awe and appreciation of a new father. What makes the introspective song so moving is that Springsteen uses the moment of happiness to acknowledge the times of past trial and doubt that once were a barrier to his own emotional fulfillment.

For years, expressions of happiness were considered dangerous for rock's great artists because it might bring complacency. But you don't have to sacrifice your artistic instincts when acknowledging moments of comfort and tenderness. In these two albums, Springsteen offers living proof.

Robert Hilburn
Los Angeles Times

The sound of retreat

It's easy to like and respect Springsteen. His songs invariably sound hard-won and homemade, every drumbeat and guitar solo making its point (Springsteen definitely used part of the five-year gap to practice guitar). Any performer who has spent more than two decades shaping his own style shouldn't have to jettison it to stay current; better a diehard than a fashion plate. But where Springsteen used to aim for synthesis, he now prefers stasis. In both words and music, Springsteen suggests there's nothing between trend-hopping and bunkered purity, that he and his nuclear family are better off alone, that the outside world is just "57 channels and noth-

in' on"— a gloomier message than anything in the songs themselves. In the end, *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town* offer the twanging, stomping, pensive, troubled well-crafted sound of retreat.

Jon Pareles
New York Times

We've all been there

The two discs are obviously a bid for attention in a market he hasn't tested in years. But at the same time, they're set up like complementary signals from two sides of his musical personality. The separation is artificial; traits leak back and forth. After all, Springsteen's personal pastiche of rock's past is the history of garage bands writ large with immense and loving skill. (Even when his lyrics don't click or get bathetic, his songwriting craft is awesome.) That's one reason he connects with us. One way or another, we've all been there. Yeah, the music feels somewhat static as a result. But that also underlines the fact that rock 'n' roll stopped being the innovative engine of American pop-musical development around the time Springsteen appeared on the scene.

But his whole approach—his empathy with his audience, the way he leaves it to them to connect the issues he raises. . . could make him a kind of American pop-culture disciple like Bertolt Brecht. His parables, like Brecht's, outline dilemmas whose suggestive power doesn't stop with the music.

Gene Santoro
The Nation

No second guessing

Unlike Michael Jackson, that other rock icon of the '80s, Springsteen must redefine himself on every new record. If *Tunnel of Love*, released five years ago, was a meditation on ambivalence, *Human Touch* seems to find Springsteen coming to terms with need, while *Lucky Town* provides a more optimistic postscript. If he inspects doubt on the former, he finds hope on the latter and, while breaking no new musical ground on these companion pieces, he has created his most mature and subtle work to date. Such subtleties may be wasted on a mass audience, but Springsteen didn't get where he is by second-guessing the evanescent taste of the great unwashed.

Joel Selvin
San Francisco Chronicle

Both are solid

If you find it too unforgivably irreverent to call Bruce Springsteen's *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town* *Skipper* and *Little Buddy*, you might think of them as Mutt and Jeff. Either way, the two records. . .lean against each other like hobbled old war veterans: each fills in the inadequacies of the other.

Neither gives us anything as rich or as raw as *Born in the USA*, but there's a comforting solidity to both records. Springsteen is still doing all those typical Springsteen things: looking for redemption, thinking, *thinking* about his feelings every minute, fashioning even his most base urges into lines that radiate an almost gentlemanly dignity. He could never be complacent (or even, perhaps, content) enough to make a true fat-and-happy record on the level of, say, Van Morrison's *Tupelo Honey*.

Often, though, the subtext shining through these songs is "I can hardly believe I'm so happy. Please, God, don't let me mess up." As if he felt unworthy of happiness. It's much easier to connect with the material on *Tunnel of Love*; there, Springsteen stared right into the beckoning maw of romance and saw mostly sharp teeth and inky blackness.

Stephanie Zacharek
The Boston Phoenix

Solving the great mystery

To read some of the snide pre-release quips about the new albums, you'd think that settling down is a crime. Heck, with rock listeners now well into their 30s (and beyond), marriage and parenthood may be the only worthy topics. Springsteen-bashers also allege that his wealth spreads a retroactive taint on the working-class-Joe stuff of *Born in the USA* and previous albums.

But Springsteen is smart enough to see the irony and the humor in his situation. "57 Channels (And Nothin' On)" starts out as a familiar complaint about cable TV, but when Springsteen's Hollywood Hills-millionaire protagonist sings about taking a gun and blasting his TV "in the blessed name of Elvis," those 57 channels become a vivid metaphor for the emptiness of fame, for heartsickness amid excess. Springsteen solves one of pop culture's great mysteries—What made Elvis shoot up his TV?—and he should know. He's been there.

Joyce Millman
San Francisco Examiner

Across the great divide

The harbinger appeared on the Southside Johnny song, "It's Been a Long Time." In a classic, brooding voice, Bruce Springsteen sang, "We were never going to get old." You can detect the bemusement and, perhaps, the uneasiness in Springsteen's voice as he sings with a sense of irony. That irony carries over to *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town*.

Springsteen *has* gotten older; in his music, you can hear how his priorities have changed. Up to this point, Springsteen was known for his obsessive/compulsive nature about his songwriting. Now, with a family and new priorities, Springsteen probably can't afford to be the songwriter that he was in 1975. As a result, the music is less consistent than previous albums; while individual tracks are strong, the overall concept seems to lack focus and cohesion. Springsteen can still write the odd song as great as "Thunder Road" or "Incident on 57th Street," but for now, the big picture is beyond him. But one can hardly fault him for that. If his family life takes precedent over his career, so be it.

Part of the negative reaction to *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town* may stem more from a subconscious resentment of Springsteen's approach to songwriting rather than genuine disappointment with the music. Now that Springsteen seems to have found some answers and contentment in his own life, listeners may be turned off. Perhaps this results from a realization that they haven't found their own answers.

So, Springsteen drops out of sight, doesn't pick up a guitar for a year, gets his life together, has two kids, and makes two records that aren't the best things he's done. With the scrutiny this society places on those we pay to entertain, the myopic nature of the mass media, and our penchant for smashing our idols when we grow weary of them, it's a wonder he even bothered. But I'm glad he did.

Jonathan B. Pont
Backstreets Associate Editor

THE CRITICS COMMENT

"But Springsteen is smart enough to see the irony and the humor in his situation."

"For years, expressions of happiness were considered dangerous for rock's great artists because it might bring complacecy."

"Any performer who has spent more than two decades shaping his own style should not have to jettison it to stay current; better a diehard than a fashion plate."

BACKSTREETS READERS COMMENT

"I'm impressed with how much more personal the songs have become. They no longer sound third person in their perspective, but seem instead to come from a personal journal or diary."

"The album lacks the cohesiveness of past Springsteen albums, but the mixture of different styles and emotions more than compensates."

"Listening to these two albums, it is painfully apparent how much the E Street Band is missed. Although the drumming is adequate, Max Weinberg's absence is glaring."

Not at his best

I've been a Springsteen fan since 1984 and I'm sorry that I didn't discover his music sooner. I've listened to the new discs over and over and they're average, certainly not Springsteen at his best. It sounds like he's happy, but give me *Born to Run* or *Darkness* any day.

Heidi Szabo
Old Bridge, New Jersey

Worth the four years

I can't remember having such a positive reaction to anything that Bruce has done since *Darkness on the Edge of Town*. As a reader of *Backstreets* magazine, I have kept up with all of Springsteen's doings for the past five years but felt myself drifting away from Bruce's music more and more. These two masterpieces have completely revived my interest and admiration.

By moving away from the E Street Band, he has discovered a new creative side we hadn't seen before. *Lucky Town* seems to be a perfect progression from *Tunnel of Love*. Both albums have something for every Springsteen fan. They were well worth the wait.

FP
Morristown, NJ

Writing more for himself

Listening to the two new albums gives me the impression that Bruce is no longer trying to please all of the people, but that he is writing music to please himself, to address the demons that have accompanied his past successes.

Some of the songs address his rise to rock hero and the resulting backlash and fall from grace. He addresses the conflict of being a "rich man in a poor man's shirt." He speaks of the comfort he has found with his new family, and also the first-hand observation that "with every wish there comes a curse."

Human Touch is the more heavily-produced and steps furthest away from the E Street Band sound of the past. Long time fans may be disappointed with the sound, but the varied styles and messages have grown on me after repeated listenings. The album lacks the cohesiveness of past Springsteen albums, but the mixture of different styles and emotions more than compensates. Having recently become a father myself, "Living Proof" and "Pony Boy" (which I have found myself singing to my own infant son) pack an extreme emotional punch.

Lucky Town was immediately the more accessible of the two albums. "Better Days" in particular drew me in with lyrics of a man who has come to grips with his past and taken comfort in the idea of a family and commitment, a sentiment that runs throughout the album. The stripped-down sound of *Lucky Town* pulled me in, but after repeated listenings, I have to say that each album stands on its own. It's refreshing to hear albums recorded by an adult for an adult audience.

Ron Scott Freedman
San Juan Capistrano, CA

Bruce sees the light

A decade and a half ago in "Don't Look Back," Bruce Springsteen proclaimed, "the deck's stacked/Put your foot to the floor and darlin' don't look back." Fifteen years later, his albums still have gambling metaphors, but now they are written by someone who realizes that though life is a game of chance, "when it comes to luck, you make your own." Ultimately, we must all play the hand we are dealt, and if it's a lousy hand, we must deal with it and not run away.

Though *Human Touch* contains two of the best new songs ("With Every Wish" and "I Wish I Were Blind"), it lacks the cohesion that has held most Springsteen records together. After hearing the piano version of "Real World," the album version loses some of its emotion. Still, the record shows Springsteen's talents as a writer, something that was overshadowed by the talents of the E Street Band.

Lucky Town picks up where *Tunnel of Love* left off, but it offers the contented statement of a person who sees the light as much as he sees the darkness, and can except the presence of both in his life. "My Beautiful Reward" closes the album but offers a far more positive statement than "Valentine's Day."

It's been a four year drought, but the skies have opened and brought a beautiful reward.

Paul Verette
Lee, NH

What Springsteen wanted

I think the new albums are terrific. Maybe they aren't the best things that Springsteen has ever done, but an okay Springsteen album is by far and away better than a great album by most other artists. Bruce has put more honest emotion into these two albums than anyone since Roy Orbison sang "Crying." His songwriting has matured greatly and his singing has never been stronger. The musicians on the album have created a sound that the E Street Band could have never achieved. It's not better or worse, just different, and I think that's what Bruce wanted. My favorite song? Well, not to get into superlatives, but I think that "Living Proof" may be the most lyrically beautiful song he has written since "Backstreets."

Kevin Barnett
Alameda, CA

Songs are more personal

Although there are a few "filler" tracks on *Human Touch*, I love both the albums. I'm glad that both the albums include some humorous touches ("All or Nothin' at All," "Local Hero"), an element that was missing on *Tunnel of Love* and helps keep both albums from becoming mired in some of the darker songs. I'm impressed with how much more personal the songs have become. They no longer sound third person in their perspective, but seem instead to come from a personal journal or diary, especially the songs on *Human Touch*.

I like the sound of the albums; the rhythm section sounds a bit funkier feel than the E Street Band.

John Fix
Eastchester, NY

Still searching

I've noticed that several critics have called *Human Touch* too commercial. Well, what the hell is wrong with that? I mean, *Nebraska* was a fine, thought-provoking album, but I wouldn't put it on for casual listening or as party music.

Lucky Town seems to be compared to *Nebraska* and *Tunnel of Love* in style and content. I think the new albums are two sides of the same street, or, more simply, two sides of the same piece of paper.

It's curious to note that marriage and fatherhood have not settled the questions and fears Bruce raised with *Tunnel*; rather, they seem to have magnified and made him more doubtful and at the same time, more hopeful. How else does one explain "Souls of the Departed" and "Better Days" on the same record?

Also of curiosity are the changes in the songs originally performed at the Christic Institute. I'm not really thrilled with the sparse bass-only "57 Channels." And as strong as "Real World" and "Soul Driver" sound on the disc, they suffer in comparison to the stunning solo acoustic performances.

Listening to these two albums, it is painfully apparent how much the E Street Band is missed. Although the drumming is adequate, Max Weinberg's absence is glaring. And how many of these songs scream for a saxophone break in the middle bars from Clarence Clemons? I understand Bruce's desire to break with the past, but jeez, Bruce, did you have to go cold turkey?

Minor complaints aside, these are two very strong discs of powerful, compelling songs.

Bill Curtis
Salem, MA

Still the same

When I first listened to the new Springsteen albums, part of me was ecstatic and part of me was let down. The wait had become so painfully long that I would have accepted almost anything. Still, I never dreamed that Bruce could become predictable with his music. Both albums are strong, though neither offers anything radically different from his last few albums. The ballads are passionate and the rockers are solid, exactly what we have come to expect from Bruce.

Lyrically, Bruce is exploring the same ground as he did on *Tunnel*. Musically, I think Bruce has sounded the same since *The River*, especially on the up-tempo songs. He is no longer as adventurous as he used to be. This is where the disappointment sets in. I realize that Bruce is not the same person he was 15 years ago, and to expect him to write thematically and musically as he did then is not fair. As a married man with children at 42, he is not going to write about the things that interested him when he was 25. Still, I miss the melodrama of "Jungleland" and the vignette style of "Kitty's Back." I would have liked him to go out more on a limb than he did on the new albums.

But maybe I've got to forget about those songs that I associate with my past, and accept the fact that *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town* typify the music that makes Bruce happy.

Marvin Matthews
Greenfield Park, Quebec
Canada

A commercial venture

I am disappointed. I waited four years to have papa Bruce come and gloat at me. Whereas *Backstreets* has made a very honorable and courageous decision to stay out of Bruce's private life and I appreciated that. Now Springsteen has gone and done just that. Frankly, I don't give a damn about Patti's breasts. If I did, I would have bought *The Enquirer* and looked at the pictures.

I think the key to Bruce's music has been the struggle. Sometimes, it's with themes, like on *Born to Run* and *Darkness*; sometimes, it's with the music, like going pop on *Born in the USA*. That underlying current has always been what has made the work strong. On the new albums, there is very limited struggle. For me, the best songs are when he tries to come to grips with his stature, like on "Lucky Town" and "Local Hero"; or with fear, like on "If I Should Fall Behind." Juvenile songs like "Gloria's Eyes" and "Real Man" insult my intelligence. I could have bought the Bryan Adams album a year ago for that.

Many of the lyrics are heavy and often ring false. Springsteen has never been Bob Dylan and I wish he wouldn't try now. Further, I can't help but think how much better some of these songs would have been with the tightness and chemistry of the E Street Band. If Springsteen would have come out with an album using other musicians that the Band couldn't have performed and he failed, I would have applauded and admired him for trying. But most of these songs sound like E Street Band throwaways.

We deserve something more than a cheap commercial venture with themes and music that were much more beautifully explored on *The River* and *Tunnel of Love*. Is there no famine in the world? Is there no inner-city crime? Isn't there an AIDS crisis? Isn't this an election year? Didn't Springsteen participate in the Amnesty International tour? Is there anybody besides Bruce and Patti and their children and their love? I am disappointed that an artist of Springsteen's stature has taken such a cop-out. I would have been much more satisfied if Springsteen had put out a press release two years ago saying he has gotten to that place where he really wanted to go, that's he's retiring to walk in the sun, and that he wishes us luck on our journey. That takes much more artistic courage than *Human Touch* or *Lucky Town*.

David Billotti
Warren, MI

The little albums

With his new albums, Bruce Springsteen has created an uplifting body of work that celebrates the finding and understanding of adult love and the often-overlooked importance of family. "Leap of Faith" and "Living Proof" give hope to those of us who are still searching. The rewards of this work, however, are bittersweet.

Although popularity should never be a measure of greatness, Springsteen's career decisions seem to have confused and even alienated some of his die-hard fans. To disband E Street and then boldly create a new band that sounds like E Street yet has none of that spirit seems downright egotistical and disloyal. Also, to ignore the press and his loyal following for over three years makes one feel like a good friend who has been taken for a ride. Even a short statement by the oh-so-cautious Jon Landau would have been suitable.

All this aside, Springsteen no longer makes albums which aim to be rock 'n' roll landmarks. Instead, he has opted, like U2, to make "little" albums, free of didacticism, full of introspection. Championing love and family may seem less romantic than "Racing in the Street," but one must take into account that Bruce Springsteen, the 42 year-old could never get away with such romanticism. That is better left to younger rockers. To sum it up, the man who once vowed "No Surrender" has

BACKSTREETS READERS COMMENT

"Championing love and family may seem less romantic than "Racing in the Street," but one must take into account that Bruce Springsteen, the 42 year-old could never get away with such romanticism."

"We deserve something more than a cheap commercial venture with themes and music that were much more beautifully explored on *The River* and *Tunnel of Love*."

"I think the key to Bruce's music has been the struggle. That underlying current has always been what has made the work strong. On the new albums, there is very limited struggle."

BACKSTREETS READERS COMMENT

"I respect Bruce's work because he doesn't do anything because of what others will think. I think he has asserted his artistic liberty more on these two albums than on any other."

"I feel that some of these songs should have been left as they had been in the Christic Institute shows. When working them up with the full band, the songs really seemed to have lost something."

"Musically, I think Bruce has sounded the same since *The River*, especially on the up-tempo songs. He is no longer as adventurous as he used to be."

discovered that in order to survive, one must find inner peace and that you can't fight "a war no man can ever win."

Michael Psicihulios
Mt. Vernon, NY

Things found and lost

I don't think there has been an album since *Nebraska* that has been as hard to figure out as these two. There is just so much to consider, so much going on with Bruce. I disagree with the critics about one album being better. There is good and bad on both albums.

My main impression was that the lyrics were great but what happened to the music? There are great guitar solos, but Bruce has always had such great melodies with great hooks. I found many of the songs to be not up to par, almost as though Bruce's musical muse had failed him. The music just didn't seem to go anywhere, repetitious musical phrases repeated again and again.

I heard "Roll of the Dice" and I immediately began to bounce around, thinking, "Yeah, this is more like it, a tune, a melody!" Roy Bittan's wonderful piano hook contributes so much to that song. It really made me realize one of the differences between this music and Bruce's earlier stuff: no E Street Band. I understand his need to move in new musical directions, maybe work with some new people. Still, "Roll" really helped me to appreciate just how much the E Street Band contributed to Bruce's unique sound and success.

I feel that some of these songs should have been left as they had been in the Christic Institute shows. When working them up with the full band, the songs really seemed to have lost something. Some of them should have been stark, like those on *Nebraska*, especially "Real World." Sometimes, less is better.

Sometimes, I think that Bruce needs to stay closer to his roots. His life now makes his image as a working-class hero seem like a farce. I am not passing judgment on him: we all need to find our own way. But we shouldn't kid ourselves that the changes in his life will not affect his outlook and his understanding of things.

Tony Solari
Durham, NC

Music doesn't fit

While the writing is good and sometimes great, the music on *Human Touch* doesn't always work and many of the tracks are overproduced. Why the up-tempo beat on "Soul Driver" and "Real World"? I much prefer the sparse, acoustic versions played at the Christic Institute shows. "57 Channels" is the low point of the record and another example of a good song gone bad.

Bright spots include "Cross My Heart," "With Every Wish," and "All or Nothin' At All." Bruce remains in good voice throughout and his vocals seems to have captured a bit of the old intensity and joy of the earlier albums. There is some outstanding guitar and the musicianship is categorically excellent if not always inspired. I would have preferred, however, Max Weinberg's drumming to Jeff Porcaro's.

As with *Human Touch*, the best part of *Lucky Town* is the writing. Springsteen creates some wonderful images, particularly in "Book of Dreams" and "Living Proof." Again, some of the music doesn't seem to fit. To me, "Souls of the Departed" is an example of great lyrics obscured by the wrong sound. Overall, *Lucky Town* is closer to what I had hoped for in these records, but still misses the mark.

Jeff Dilley
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL

Bruce: Van's your man

Are you as disappointed with the studio recording of "Real World" as I am?

When I heard the Christic Institute version of him sitting at the piano and moaning this new song, I thought it was the most moving Springsteen had been in years. Then what does he go and do? He turns it into an overproduced "hot hot hot" cruiseship dance number that drives me right back to my Van Morrison records! And what's the deal with "Real Man"? Perhaps the cheesiest Bruce of all-time. He should stay away from songs with the word "real."

Bruce, please let the tapes roll and take a listen to Van again!

Charlie Guido
Newburgh, NY

Happiness found here

Both of the albums are quite listenable. The only problem I have is that none of the songs explores new styles. All of the material could have been on any of his previous albums. For example, songs like "I Wish I Were Blind" and "Human Touch" stem directly from the *Tunnel of Love* genre. Although much more instrumentally heavy, songs like "With Every Wish," "Pony Boy," and "Book of Dreams" are all very *Nebraska*-like in a lyrical sense.

Bruce has shown us that he does care about his music and is not out just for big sales. Every true fan will be happy with these albums.

Justin Hales
Little Rock, AR

More creative freedom

My first thought was about the cover of the two albums. If they are supposed to be two entirely different works, why are the front covers virtually the same? Type, color, layout. . .

I like the second side of *Human Touch* best. I find "Real World" and "Man's Job" very catchy. The duet on "Man's Job" make me wish Bruce did those in his earlier works more often. "I Wish I Were Blind" is poetry: it's the song every jilted lover sings in his heart.

Musically, Bruce seems to be experimenting more in the studio. One thing I always liked about his music is that is seemed to be recorded live, with minimal overdubs. Unfortunately, these two depart from that. I'm concerned that the music won't come off as well in concert.

I respect Bruce's work because he doesn't do anything because of what others will think. I think he has asserted his artistic liberty more on these two albums than on any other.

Matt Conens
Medford, OR

Dismissing the past

These albums are a lot more low-key than anything he's done in the past. He hinted at this kind of material on *Tunnel of Love*, but this is the full-blown realization of that. The early critical word is that

these albums have been a bit of a letdown because they aren't *Born in the USA*, which I think is funny because he was basically just a normal guy who was turned into this superhero by the media. And then he was blasted by some people because he married an actress/model and then got divorced. A lot of people said that by doing that, he sold out everything he stood for. But what could be more all-American than a failed relationship? I think when he sings "Ain't no church bells ringin'/Ain't no flags unfurled" on "Real World," he dismisses all of that stuff.

I don't see where there's a whole lot of difference between the two. Overall, I think I prefer *Human Touch*, because I like the songs a little better than the others. I think his music is all about honesty and passion and never more so than on these records.

Stu Reid
Backstreets Contributor
Winnipeg, Alberta
Canada

Meet the new boss

What makes these two CDs such a huge disappointment for me, despite breaking no new musical ground, is the lyrics. I can't believe this is the same man who once wrote something as magical and literate as "In the day we sweat it out on the streets of a runaway American dream." It's obvious that not a lot of thought went into this latest batch: they're sloppy, sophomoric, and repetitious. I was shocked by how many themes, lines, and phrases we've heard before. To wit: "Ain't no mercy on the streets of this town" ("Human Touch"); "Ain't no words of mercy comin' from on high" ("The Long Goodbye"). Once again, we return to "the river" over and over and everything ends up before the judge ("Nebraska," "Johnny 99," "57 Channels"). When I was 15 and naive, one of the first love poems I wrote a girl referred to "the love the bluebird brings." Now I cringe when I remember it; here, it shows up in two songs by a man in his 40s!

I guess I was looking for something a little more meaningful and original after five years! *Human Touch* has also given us the unequivocal, hands-down worst Bruce song ever: "Real Man." Where we once got Clarence's mighty sax, we now get cheesy synthesized horns.

I'll sum it up by quoting a consistently original lyricist: "Meet the new boss, same as the old boss."

Dan Clawson
Decatur, IL

Inspiring and hopeful

This is clearly Springsteen's most optimistic work since *Born to Run*. In the '80s, Bruce asked what it meant to be an American; With *Tunnel of Love* and on into the '90s, he asks what it means to be a man. The songs on *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town* are written with a vigilant eye toward even better days ahead. This inspiring and hopeful outlook is as much needed today as it ever was.

Human Touch is a disappointment. Somehow, the Christic Institute shows were a mixed blessing. One wishes that the songs common to the shows and the *Human Touch* would have retained their original arrangements. *Lucky Town's* power is solidly held within its words. The music is evenly rigid and sparse.

It's increasingly difficult to relate to that kid on *Darkness*. This man's climb to the top of the hill has only culminated in him building a wall there. Bruce seems largely uncomfortable with his wealth, or at least his superstardom. Perhaps when faced with the reality of a family, the price you pay for fame is too much. The ultimate irony is that this man, after all this success, is still struggling. Here is a man who has finally taken a solemn look back on a body of work, on a career, on a life, and found it all quite worthwhile.

Joseph Lahr
Manchester, NH

Bruce: the golden touch

I hated the "Human Touch" single when I first heard it. The four-and-a-half year wait had built up an expectation level far too high; I thought it sounded like a second-rate imitator doing his version of what a Springsteen song should sound like.

Nothing prepared me for *Human Touch*—the album. Quite simply, I believe it to be the best album of released material since *Born to Run*.

"Blasphemy!" I hear fans scream. Case in point: *The River*, my least favorite album, becomes an even bigger bomb when compared to the wealth of incredible outtakes from that era, outtakes that highlight studio guitar work that lived up to the promise of his playing on the 1978 tour; none of that material appeared on the album, ditto for *Born in the USA* (save for "Cover Me," perhaps). So the case can be made that we've barely heard any of Bruce's lead guitar playing on record at all.

Not so with *Human Touch*. The cover image says it all: the soulful, every-note-counts tasteful touch that Bruce finally built songs around and then released. Drop the title track and "Real Man" (one of the worst songs Bruce has ever written) put "Pony Boy" and "57 Channels" on *Lucky Town*, and you're left with the heart of the album, a more reasonably-lengthed 10 songs.

As "Thunder Road" defined themes on *Born to Run*, so does "Real World" on *Human Touch*. They lay out themes of faith, redemption, and escape on their respective albums. The Christic Institute version of "Real World" mirrors the early acoustic version of "Thunder Road."

But the line in "Thunder Road" about learning to make the guitar talk is not lived up to in that song; rather, the guitar solo leaps out of "Real World." It's pure joy. Another telling tale is the phrase is "I wanna find some answers, I wanna ask for some help." I interpret this to be about the music. The contributions made by faces old and new on this album cannot be underestimated in providing some of the these songs' best moments. In the case of "Real World," it's Sam Moore's great harmony vocals and the fact that, for the first time in Bruce's recording history, another band member (Bittan) is credited with co-writing.

"All or Nothing at All" exemplifies a song that on first listen may appear to be fluff, but it's got more muscle than the similarly structured "I'm Going Down." In the context of the lyrical pursuits of this album, this song becomes another statement of purpose for Bruce. Even when Bruce writes a "throw-away" catchy-chorus pop song, he makes the song mean something.

Arlen Schumer
***Backstreets* Contributor**
New York, NY

BACKSTREETS READERS COMMENT

"Bruce has shown us that he does care about his music and is not out just for big sales. Every true fan will be happy with these albums."

"And what's the deal with 'Real Man'? Perhaps the cheesiest Bruce of all-time. He should stay away from songs with the word 'real.'"

"It's obvious that not a lot of thought went into this latest batch: they're sloppy, sophomoric, and repetitious. I was shocked by how many themes, lines, and phrases we've heard before."

ON TAPE

Helping the Novice Collector

A Secret History of Live Recording

By Lynn Elder

Back in 1974, a young man named Joe got into the music of Bruce Springsteen. He had both of Springsteen's albums at the time, and had seen enough of his concerts to know that a Springsteen show was bound to be an entirely different affair than any previous ones. Not only would Bruce perform new and unreleased material, but also a never-ending series of cover songs that would surprise you every single night. Songs like "Cupid," "Spanish Harlem," "Up on the Roof," and "Then She Kissed Me." At the time, there was no indication when Bruce's next album would appear, but Springsteen was playing the Northeast frequently in the interim, earning money to pay the rent.

On any given weekend, Joe was no more than a five-hour car ride from a Springsteen concert. Before one such drive, Joe decided to take his tape recorder along so he could capture some of Bruce's new material to listen to at home. At that show in New York, Joe heard two new songs, "Jungleland" and "Born to Run," and the tape he made, though not quite up to professional standards, was quite listenable.

Around the same time, a young man named Cliff from another city on the east coast had the same idea as Joe. Like Joe, Cliff had also fallen in love with Springsteen's music and began to tape Springsteen's shows for his own home use. The two met up at a show at the end of 1974 and discovered they shared this hobby. While comparing notes, they found that each had taped shows the other had missed. The respective shows contained songs not performed elsewhere. A simple arrangement was made: Joe would trade copies of the shows he had recorded for copies of shows Cliff recorded. And with that deal, Springsteen tape trading commenced.

Names and specifics notwithstanding, this is basically how Springsteen tape trading got its start. Tape trading of all artists has grown into a sizable hobby, particularly with Grateful Dead fans, but with Springsteen's as well. The Dead, Bob Dylan, and Bruce Springsteen are probably the most heavily collected artists, in large part because their live performances are known for unusual songs, alternate arrangements of known songs, and changing set lists. For Springsteen fans, these frequent changes in the set list—including those made during the show—and the long gaps between albums and tours seemed to fuel the enthusiasm for taping shows. Another contributing factor was the series of live radio broadcasts Bruce did between 1973 and 1978 that any true fan was sure to record.

Despite the fact that no money ever changes hands, it isn't entirely clear whether tape trading is legal. To be sure, the Grateful Dead encourage their fans to tape, even reserving a special section at all shows to accomodate them. Prince and R.E.M. seem to tolerate it as long as no one is profiting from it. Despite good intentions, however, bootleg LPs and CDs are marked up ridiculously and, somewhere along the line, someone is making a killing. The same is true for the sale of live audio and video tapes. Why should someone who traded a tape for only the cost of a blank charge you $25 for an inferior copy of it?

There a ways to start a collection without having any shows to trade. Many collectors will trade for blanks from those who are just getting started. Classified advertisements in collector's magazines are a good place to start, whether you place an ad of your own or respond to one. Beware, however, because it can get overwhelming at first. The excitement of obtaining new material can result in tapes coming in faster than you can enjoy them and too fast to send out responses. Start small and slow. Trading for more than a couple shows at a time can be disasterous, resulting in disappointment from lower than expected sound quality or burnout from listening to too many.

The point isn't to see how many shows you can get, but to expand your collection to include great shows and music you enjoy. But how to do this from square one? A good idea for the novice tape trader is to try to get one show from each tour that is both high sound quality and representative of that tour. In the early years, you may need two shows from each year to achieve that. The following list outlines 15 shows that are commonly circulated and would be make a good foundation for the beginning collector.

THE TOP 15
1. 4/24/73
2. 1/19/74
3. 2/5/75
4. 8/15/75
5. 4/7/76
6. 3/25/77
7. 7/7/78
8. 12/19/78
9. 12/15/80
10. 8/20/81
11. 8/20/84
12. 11/16/84
13. 10/13/86
14. 5/3/88
15. 11/16/90

1. The Main Point, Bryn Mawr, PA 4/24/73. This radio broadcast offers high quality sound and a strong seven song set. Included are unreleased gems "Thundercrack," "Santa Ana," and "Tokyo." An essential early snapshot of Bruce.

2. Kent State University, Kent, OH 1/19/74. A soundboard recording highlights the talents of pianist David Sancious and the jazziest era for the E Street Band. Long jams extend many of the songs. This show includes the earliest known recording of "Incident on 57th Street" and a great "Blinded by the Light." The real treat is a performance of "You Mean So Much to Me," a Springsteen original played from 1971 to 1974 and eventually given to Southside Johnny.

3. The Main Point, Bryn Mawr, PA 2/05/75. This radio broadcast features several early performances of songs released the following September on *Born to Run*. The four songs appear in slightly different forms than on the album, with either lyrics or musical nuances changed later. The performance is marvelous and the set includes the piano version of "Incident" followed by a rollicking cover of "Mount-ain of Love." Also included is Springsteen's cover of Bob Dylan's "I Want You," highlighted by Suki Lahav's string arrangement. This show, perhaps more so than any other, showed where Springsteen had been—and where he was going.

4. The Bottom Line, New York, NY 8/15/75 Another essential radio broadcast, though never available in truly outstanding quality. Great covers of "Every Time You Walk in the Room," "Then She Kissed Me," and "Quarter to Three." Often overlooked is the fact that this set contains only four songs from *Born to Run*. Max Weinberg once called this one of the band's greatest performances.

5. Michigan State University, E. Lansing, MI 4/07/76. An 18 song set includes four more songs not performed at the Bottom Line, including the rarely performed "Meeting Across the River." In fact, it is the only known show where all eight

PAUL JAY PLUTZER PHOTO

At the historic Boston Music Hall run, 3/22/77.

songs from *Born to Run* are performed. Also performed is the classic "Frankie," an original recorded and considered for both *Darkness on the Edge of Town* and *Born in the USA* but only performed live only during April of 1976. This is the first audience recording of the list, but it is avialable in very high quality.

6. Music Hall, Boston, MA 3/25/77. Absolute magic. Thankfully, a great audience tape of this was made and is in circulation (better than the one used for the CD *Forced to Confess*). A great show made better by the performance of "Don't Look Back," another great original rocker that was recorded for Darkness but remains unreleased. The Miami Horns add greatly to "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out" and "Action in the Streets" (another unreleased rave-up) and the final encore of "Little Latin Lupe Lu," "You Can't Sit Down," and "Higher and Higher." Some have argued that this show was one of Bruce's greatest. They certainly have good evidence.

7. The Roxy, Los Angeles, CA 7/07/78. No problems here. Seven songs from *Darkness*, the first performances of "Point Blank" and "Independence Day," and five covers, including the screaming "Rave On" opener and an impromptu "Heartbreak Hotel." Fantastic, crystal-clear FM sound thanks to sound engineer Jimmy Iovine. Rumored to have been considered for a live album in late 1978; eight songs from this show would appear on the *Live* album.

8. Paramount Theatre, Portland, OR 12/19/78. A fine example of the latter part of the *Darkness* tour and an excellent audience tape as well. A 27 song set sprinkled with such gems such as the then-new "The Ties That Bind," as well as a fine "Santa Claus," and a "Good Rockin' Tonight" opener. "Darkness on the Edge of Town" is performed in the encore.

9. Boston Garden, Boston, MA 12/15/80. This show finds Bruce in the midst of changing the set list substantially. Rather than packing the show with 18 or so of the tunes from *The River*, Bruce chooses material from the new album very carefully, performing just over half the new songs. The result is a more focused, if slightly shorter, show. Includes a fiery "Born to Run" opener, a rare performance of "The Price You Pay," as well as "Sandy" and "For You." Probably the best 1980 show and a great tape, too.

10. Sports Arena, Los Angeles, CA 8/20/81. The summer '81 shows have an entirely different feel than the early *River* dates. Bruce's experience in Europe (Stockholm, 5/08/81 is an excellent example) had a profound effect and began a change that would culminate in *Nebraska*. A benefit show for Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, Bruce delivers what may be his most passionate performance ever. The show includes definitive versions of "The Ties That Bind" and "Darkness on the Edge of Town" as well as a one and only performance of "Ballad of Easy Rider."

11. Brendan Byrne Arena, E. Rutherford, NJ 8/20/84. With special guests Little Steven and the Miami Horns, the final night of a ten show run stands as a sort of homecoming. A classic show, with long sets and much of the *Born in the USA* album performed. A great surprise debut of "Drift Away" highlights the reunion for Bruce and Little Steven. Magic in the night, indeed.

12. Hilton Coliseum, Ames IA 11/16/84. The shows from this part of the tour featured a great *Nebraska* set that was the real highlight of the show. Included are the new arrangements for "Reason to Believe" and "Johnny Bye Bye." "Sugarland," a brilliant song about a farmer who is forced to burn crops he can't sell, is performed for the first of only two times. Taken together, these songs form the heart and soul of what *Born in the USA* concept, album, and tour were intended to be rather than the hype and misinterpretation that it became. Note the somber performance of "Racing in the Street" (with a new spoken introduction) in the place of "Rosalita" to close the second set.

13. Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, CA 10/13/86. On this night, Bruce Springsteen reinvented himself. This 70-minute acoustic set, with help from Danny Federici and Nils Lofgren, highlights Bruce's skills as an acoustic player for the first time in many years. The cornerstone of this show is the acoustic version of "Born in the USA," a radically reworked blues number that leaves no doubt as to the meaning of the song. "Seeds" is also stripped-down to its probable origins, resulting in beautiful playing between the three musicians and a poignant vocal by Springsteen. This show, only weeks before the release of the *Live* album, served as one of those rare reminders of the power of the songs themselves and the importance of taking a chance.

14. Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, CA 5/3/88. This venue seems to evoke a lot from Bruce Springsteen. After weeks of nearly identical performances, the show began to vary a bit more in Los Angeles. At the Shoreline, however, the truly spontaneous Springsteen returned. Dancing through the crowd as if it were 1978, this show gives both the *Tunnel* concept as first conceived in Worcester and the kind of show people dream about Bruce giving. According to the set list, the show was over, but Bruce kept on, adding "Little Latin Lupe Lu" and "Twist and Shout" to the encores. When he's happy, so are we.

15. Shrine Auditorium, Los Angeles, CA 11/16/90. The first of two benefit shows for the Christic Institute marked Springsteen's first announced public appearance in over two years. An all acoustic performance, Springsteen shocked everyone with a stunning new arrangement for "Darkness," a surprise "Wild Billy's Circus Story," and piano performances of "Tenth Avenue Freeze-Out" and "Thunder Road." Add to these four brand new songs and duets with Jackson Browne and Bonnie Raitt on "Highway 61" and "Across the Borderline" and the result is one of the most important nights of Bruce Springsteen's career.

ON COLLECTING

By Jeff McDermott

For the benefit of our readers, *Backstreets* provides ratings of unauthorized releases currently in circulation. Don't write us asking where these can be obtained. *Backstreets* in no manner, shape, or form endorses these recordings. These reviews are provided by our columnist solely for informational purposes. Despite these words of warning, some collectors will still seek this material out, and for those collectors, our reviews should help you steer clear of the real losers.

Unauthorized CDs are growing in numbers and with that growth, expect some real rip-offs — our word of advice is let the buyer beware, and demand to listen to material before you buy it. Each title here has been rated for packaging, performance and sound quality on a scale of one to ten, one being awful, and ten being quality generally found in legitimate releases.

•Nebraska Live
(Flamingo Records)
Packaging: 6
Sound Quality: 5
Performance: 8

Previously released on vinyl, *Nebraska Live* collects live versions of all the songs on *Nebraska* adding "Man At the Top" and "Shut Out the Light." Most of the tracks were recorded on the *Born in the USA* tour, and all are audience recordings. Unfortunately the quality of these recordings isn't very good on the whole, not even as good as the audience tapes of the shows in general circulation.

The packaging attempts to recreate the look of the official album, and though the idea is good one, the execution is only partially successful.

Once again, Flamingo has come up with a good idea, but the sound quality and packaging just don't live up to the concept.

•Summer Tour '81
(Flamingo Records)
Packaging: 6
Sound Quality: 7
Performance: 8

Probably the best disc so far from Flamingo, *Summer Tour '81* presents a partial soundboard recording of Springsteen in Detroit, August 12, 1981. The source tape for the disc only includes nine songs, and all are presented here, highlighted by a guest appearance by Mitch Ryder in the "Detroit Medley." This final leg of *The River* tour hasn't been documented previously on disc, and along with the obvious highlight "Jole Blon," versions of "Racing in the Street" and "Jungleland" are distinctive to this stretch of the tour. Due perhaps to a flaw in the source tape (maybe having to flip it at the soundboard?), "Rosalita" is missing a couple sections.

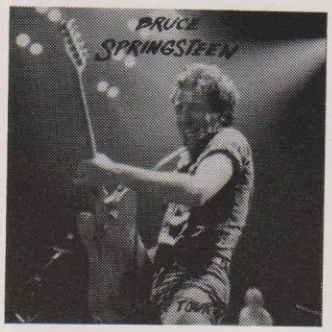
The packaging is simple, but uses nice color cover photos of the era on front and back. There's nothing dramatic to be found here, but *Summer Tour '81* does provide a partial view of a very specific part of Springsteen's performance history.

•Bruce's Club Hopping Summer
(Speedball Records)
Packaging: 4
Sound Quality: 5
Performance: 8

Featuring only one Springsteen original, this 14-song, 76 minute CD is an excellent representation of Bruce's numerous surprise appearances in small clubs. And Bruce really rocks out, minus the sometimes excessive E Street baggage, turning in great performances of "Hearts of Stone," "Stand By Me," "Under the Boardwalk" and "Tobacco Road." Backed by the likes of Bobby Bandiera, La Bamba, Southside Johnny and Cats, this CD shows Bruce's back to rock basics in much the same way as Paul McCartney's recent *Unplugged* disc.

Packaging consists of a triple foldout, with two black and white shots of Bruce in the clubs inside, but unfortunately uses a truly hideous color shot of Bruce circa 1985 on the cover.

Although only a collection of average audience recordings, this CD offers a glimpse of what most fans have been unable to see in recent years: Bruce before a small audience. Not as intimate as some of his early seventies club shows, *Club Hopping* still captures a much closer connection between



Bruce and his audience than any of his arena or stadium shows reveal. Except for the lackluster sound quality, this CD is highly recommended, especially given Bruce's well-known enthusiasm for playing in clubs.

•Rally for Disarmament
(Great Dane Records)
Packaging: 7
Sound Quality: 8
Performance: 9

Recorded on June 12, 1982 in New York's Central Park, *Rally For Disarmament* was included in a recent edition of the Italian fanzine *Follow that Dream*. This 17 minute, three song disc starts with Jackson Browne and Gary US Bonds dueting on "The Pretender," followed by Browne being joined by Springsteen for "The Promised Land" and then Browne's "Running on Empty."

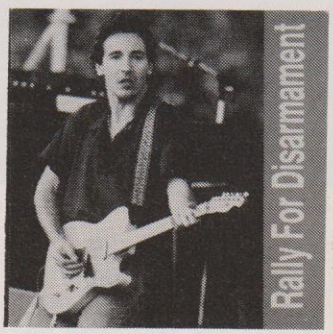
Since Jackson dominates, the makers should have billed it as Jackson Browne with special guests Bruce Springsteen and Gary US Bonds. As a freebie, it's great. The packaging uses photos taken at the show, which is a plus, but is otherwise pretty simple.

Whenever Browne and Springsteen get together, the results are great. *Rally* documents one these meetings.

•Jah Love
(Mistral Music)
Packaging: 7
Sound Quality: 7
Performance: 10

Recorded during 1987 in New Jersey, this CD is named for the reggae band with whom Bruce performs on a medley of the great Bob Marley's "One Love," "Born in the USA," and "My Hometown." The quality is very good and it is interesting to hear Bruce perform reggae versions of a couple of his more well-known songs. The remaining songs on the 45 minute disc are from the same Rumson performance found on *Bruce's Club Hopping Summer* but in superior quality.

Although it depends on your taste, the advantage of having this disc is the better sound quality of the Rumson appearance and the only known recording of Bruce playing music he once called "too complex and too pure" to describe.

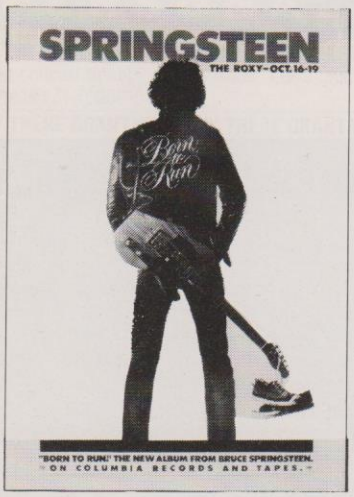


•Catch These Big Stars in the Night...if You Can
(Eagle Records)
Packaging: 6
Sound Quality: 7
Performance: 10

It's New Year's Eve 1977, and Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes are about to break in 1978 with a live broadcast from Passaic's Capitol Theater. Things heat up when Bruce and the E Street Band take to the stage. The two bands start with "Auld Lang Syne" and then Bruce calls for "Havin' a Party." "The Fever" follows, combining Bruce's slower paced cool-sax version with Southside's uptempo harmonica version.

An added attraction is an early performance of "Drive All Night." Still, *Catch These Big Stars...* is only average due to fair packaging and a lesser quality audience tape on the second disc.

ROXY '75 POSTER



The classic. These were wheatpasted all over Los Angeles before Bruce's landmark run of shows there in 1975. Somehow, we have managed to find a few that are in remarkable condition. Printed on an off-white 27" x 41" sheet, the gorgeous shot of Bruce by Eric Meola is complemented by the script printing of "Born to Run" on his coat. Original copies of this poster have never been in circulation, even among prominent collectors. Be warned, however, that there are smaller bootleg versions of this (and the similar Bottom Line '75 poster). These are the real thing, genuine, and completely original. Very few remain. The price: $100 plus $8 shipping for US, $15 overseas.

1976 PLAYBOY POSTER

In March of 1976, *Playboy* did a full length feature on Bruce Springsteen and his new-found success. A month before, they produced this poster to promote the issue. Few of these gems remain, as the poster wasn't shipped to record stores and Bruce wasn't all that popular at the time. Artist John Youssi rendered the stunning illustration of Bruce leaning on a Cadillac. Spectacular colors, and the condition is M- or better. The price: $200, plus $8 shipping for US, $15 overseas.

T-SHIRTS

Load up for the'92 tour!

Backstreets Long Sleeve. Thick 100% cotton. Killer multi-color guitar image. M, L. $12

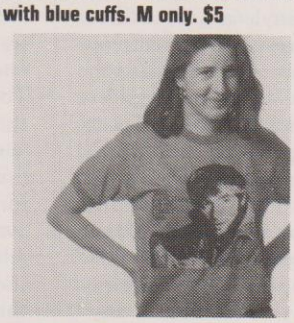
**Backstreets Sweatshirt.
Thick, red shirt, logo front, "I'm a Rocker" back. L. $13**

Classic Backstreets White. The original, white 50/50, with red logo. S, M, EX. $8

Classic Black. Black with *Backstreets* logo in shocking pink. S, L, XL. $9

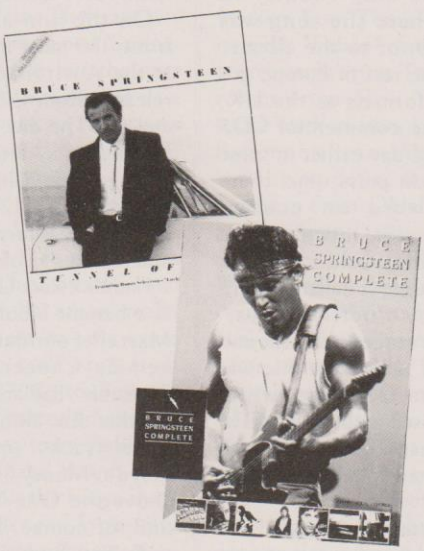
Grab bag shirt. We're overstocked on some guaranteed cool t-shirts. S and M only. You can't return these, but they're cheap. And we've added some news ones. Do it. $5

Piping Face World Tour 1985 with cities listed. Grey 50/50 with blue cuffs. M only. $5



Solid Gray World Tour. S only. Thick 50/50 shirt with portrait front. Special! $6

SONGBOOKS



Bruce Springsteen Complete

The guitar edition of this volume includes the tablature (the chord boxes for guitar) and simple melody arrangements for every song released domestically from "Blinded by the Light" through "My Hometown." Also includes unreleased chestnuts like "The Fever" and "Rendezvous." Tons of sharp color photos from the '85 tour. A handsome volume and a great, user-friendly way to learn to play Bruce Springsteen's music.

$27.95

Born in the USA

Eighty pages of lyrics and music including "Pink Cadillac." Again, includes some great off-stage photos not reproduced elsewhere, including one of Bruce driving his Corvette.

$6.95

Tunnel of Love

Complete lyrics and music to the entire LP and "Lucky Man." Contains several new Pam Springsteen portrait photos not used elsewhere. Includes a bonus full-color pull-out poster of Bruce sitting at a desk with his guitar.

$12.95

SEND ORDERS TO:

BACKSTREET RECORDS
PO BOX 51219
SEATTLE, WA 98115
OR CALL:
(206) 728-7603
FAX (206) 728-8827

for songbooks and posters, add $4 for postage and handling, t-shirts add $3.

DISC

Collecting Human Touch and Lucky Town

New Albums, Singles, CD5

These are truly better days for Bruce collectors, for after a nearly four year drought, there's a flood of new vinyl and CD collectibles. The collecting season began in the US with promotional CD5 releases of both "Human Touch" and "Better Days." The former has a picture cover of Bruce standing against a desert sky (also used on the cassette single and in the UK), and includes two versions of the song: the full length album version and the radio edit, which runs about a minute less. "Better Days" has a type only cover and includes the album version of the track. Quantities are rumored to be very limited on both, as they were primarily pressed for radio stations.

US commercial issues of "Human Touch" backed with "Better Days" were released on cassette (with picture cover) and on vinyl, as a 45 without picture sleeve. In an odd move that may further indicate the role of the 45, no picture sleeve was issued with "Human Touch" and the pressing was limited and thus immediately in demand. This also marks the first single Bruce Springsteen has released since 1978 that did not feature a non-LP b-side (see *In the News*). This was an especially odd move in the case of the domestic CD5 that featured only "Human Touch" and "Better Days." Groups like U2 and Nirvana take advantage of this format as a vehicle for alternate takes, live tracks, and songs that are otherwise unreleased. The release of the disc also came only one week before those of the albums, an anomaly given the predominance of the format. To its credit, however, is the retail price of the CD5, which is $2 less than other domestic CD5 releases.

Both albums were released on all three formats in the US, again with the vinyl LPs being the least common, as most stores across the country have stopped selling vinyl altogether. The packaging on the vinyl albums is superb, in part because there was more room on the inner sleeve for photos. The bigger images simply look great .

The major UK collectibles was the "Human Touch" picture CD5, which also includes the album versions of "Souls of the Departed" and "The Long Goodbye." Great Britain also issued cassette and vinyl singles of "Human Touch" backed by "Souls of the Departed" as well as a CD5 without the image on the disc itself. The 7" was issued with a slick heavy stock sleeve, while the picture disc CD5 was housed in a die-cut cardboard sleeve with a metallic insert. Promotional CDs of "Human Touch" issued to British radio contained the aforementioned "radio edit," with a type-only cover. In a somewhat surprising move, Sony Music in France issued "Better Days" as a single, without issuing "Human Touch." Promotional CDs of the track were issued, along with a vinyl seven-inch, making France the only country in Europe where the song was available prior to the albums' release. The rest of Europe got the same formats as the UK, though the commercial CD5 was issued a day earlier in some countries. At press time, there was no word on unusual Japanese issues, though it was expected that would follow the US in releasing "Human Touch" backed by "Better Days," though on three-inch CD and cassette. A 12" picture disc was released in Germany, while Spain released a 12" and a CD5 with "Human Touch," "Souls of the Departed," and "The Long Goodbye."

Great Britain was set to issue "Better Days" as the second single, backed with both "Part Man, Part Monkey" and a live version of "Tougher than the Rest." It will be released on CD5, 7", cassette, and 12". Also

expected was a limited edition picture CD5.

"57 Channels" was slated to be the second single in the US. It was scheduled for release toward the end of May and was also expected to include "Part Man, Part Monkey."

On the non-album related front, the most interesting find is the Australian CD5 single released from the *For Our Children* set. The disc features Little Richard's "Itsy Bitsy Spider" and Springsteen's "Chicken Lips and Lizard Hips." The disc is housed in a cardboard sleeve and features a color cover.

Flashback Rock Classics of the '70s is a benefit album for the T.J. Martell Foundation for Leukemia, Cancer, and AIDS Research. "Badlands" is included on this disc along with eleven other tracks, including Pink Floyd's "Money," Stephen Stills' "Love the One You're With," and, of course, Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Free Bird." It's available on Realm Records (Catalog No. 110566) and lists for $15.98.

In *Backstreets* #38, we reported that Columbia had re-released the "Chimes of Freedom" as a CD5. Unfortunately, that project was shelved at the last minute without explanation. Whether it will appear at some future point remains to be seen.

To commemorate the tenth anniversary of the compact disc, Columbia has issued a limited edition boxed set of three titles, including *Born to Run*. The disc itself is a Columbia Mastersound edition, complete with the gold playing surface. According to the label, the music was remastered especially for this project. The other albums included in the set are Billy Joel's *52nd Street* and Glenn Gould's performance of Bach's *The Goldberg Variations*.

Impact Records issued a promo-only harmonica for Southside Johnny to select markets around the country. It's a standard issue Hohner blues harp engraved with "Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes."

On her new live album, *At the Ryman*, Emmylou Harris covers another in a series of Bruce songs, "Mansion on the Hill," lending it a nice country arrangement. It's on Reprise Records.

CLASSIFIEDS

PERSONALS

BETTER DAYS ARE HERE. LOOKING FOR EAST Coast concert tickets. Any location. Let's talk. Michelle (718) 966-5751.

HEY THERE GRANTMAN, SAY THERE GRANTMAN, heart attack my ass! What do you live in a cloud? See you at Jack's for fried cheese tubes. A monkey clap for canals, a deeper shade of soul and Toby Tyler. Couldn't be more proud. Chrisman.

TO MY MARY, THE SEXIEST BRUCE TRAMP I know. Thank you for making me the proudest guy in the world by agreeing to marry me. I hope I make you as happy as you make me. I love you. Anthony.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER BRUCE TRAMPS IN THE Carolinas? Write! Connie Calvert, 2182 Dunlap St., 4D, N. Charleston, SC 29418.

BRUCE TRAMP SEEKING PEN PALS: DAVE BUZAN, 1314 NW 4th, Gresham, OR 97030.

SCARED AND LONELY RIDER (22) NEEDS SOMEONE to talk to and a little of that human touch. If you feel the same way, please write: Karsten Stanley Andersen, Spaettevang 5, 3450 Alleroed, Denmark.

WAIST DEEP IN THE BIG MUDDY! TRAMP NEEDS penpals, CDs, and tapes. Correspond to C. Savage, 326 10th Avenue, N. Ft. Dodge, IA 50501.

LAURA, I LOVE YOU. BEING MARRIED TO YOU IS more than heaven will allow. Thanks Johnny Mo, and John Huck (coming all the way from WI to our wedding on the Jersey Shore). Steve and Debbie, thanks. Hi Cindy, Ursula, and Amaia. Stay tuned for more of your favorite band, Soul Engines. Bruce, you've outdone yourself. I believe you're better than Def Leppard. Remember sweetheart, "If I should fall behind." Darren Scarpa, 27 Alder St., Jersey City, NJ 07305-4836. (201) 435-7928.

WANTED BRUCE PENPALS AND COLLECTORS. Derek Hughes, 23 Darren Rd., Brockton, MA 02401.

IF YOU LIKE BRUCE, PETTY, CRENSHAW, BoDeans, etc., you'll love the Marlowes. $6 for 8-song cassette. 11 Maynard St., Pawtucket, RI 02860.

HELP! DETROIT AREA SPRINGSTEEN FAN NEEDS excellent seats to upcoming MI tour stops. Paul Malyn, 3220 Croissant, Dearborn, MI 48124.

SPRINGSTEEN AUDIO AND VIDEO TAPES TO TRADE. Write for my list, or send yours. Greg Lausch, 44 Eastford Ct., Baltimore, MD 21234.

SPRINGSTEEN TO TRADE. BEGINNERS WELCOME. Julie Grayauskie, 1906 Hamilton St., Allentown, PA 18104.

WANTED

BRUCE FAN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ATLANTIC needs help in starting an audio/video collection. Will trade blank tapes and pay for shipping. AIC Leigh Bellingers, PSC 76 Box 464, APO, AE 09720.

SPRINGSTEEN TAPES FOR TRADE. OLD TRADERS please write! Will not buy or sell. Overseas people wanted too. Patrick Ganz, 35 Evergreen Ln., Glastonbury, CT 06033.

ALL YOU RECORDERS OUT THERE WHO ARE GOING to see Bruce on the road. Your list gets mine. Glenn Andersson, Mjoshult, PL 8905, 50541 Borhs, Sweden.

SPRINGSTEEN: PHOTOS, TAPES TO TRADE. Cooperation needed to obtain concert tickets for 1992. Rocco Coviello, 19 Bayberry Rd., Newburyport, MA 01950.

RATES

CLASSIFIED RATES: RATES ARE $1 A WORD for each word with 10 words or $10 minimum for all commercial ads, trades, wants, for sales or tape trades. Ads that have no commercial intent, including pen pals, messages and the like are only 50 cents a word, ten word minimum. No ads selling bootleg or unauthorized materials will be accepted. Write for display advertising rates. Backstreets assumes no responsibility for any advertising in the magazine. Please write our Consumer Services Department if you have any problems with an advertiser. Send all ads to Classifieds, Backstreets, PO Box 51225, Seattle, WA 98115, or call us at 206-728-7603 to charge your ad.

WANTED: SOUTHSIDE'S 1986 "AT LEAST WE GOT Shoes" CD (Japanese import). Also, high quality Southside tapes. Call (508) 744-3329, 6 pm EST.

AUDIO TAPES TO TRADE. ALSO WANTED, TICKETS for Bruce's European shows. Fredrik Sandh, Forsythiagatan 1, S-260 80 Munka Ljungby, Sweden

J BAY AND CHANGE BRUCE TAPES ONLY. GOT 4/24/73 (7 set). Send list to Ola Turmo, Parkv. 68, 2380 BR-DAL, Norway.

FOR SALE

FROG HEAVEN, THE HUMOROUS ROCK 'N' ROLL fable that Wendy Lucas of the Beaver Brown Fan Club calls "a riot." $6.95 payable to: Tenth Teardrop, PO Box 3251, Pasco, WA 99302-3251.

FOR SALE: SCHECTER TELECASTER PLAYED BY Bruce at McLoone's Rum Runner 10/31/87. Includes exclusive set of photos. Reasonable bids considered. Write Al, 87 Branch Ave., Red Bank, NJ 07701.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

number of *Backstreets* readers. Several radio station DJs have requested the magazine (and we're glad to put them on our list if they'll help spread the word but we're never very crazy about the DJs who announce our hotline number on the air). We've gotten letters on *New Yorker* stationery and from *Penthouse*. One subscriber formerly worked at a magazine called *Hot Talk*, which for awhile was banned in the county I live in. Advertising agencies around the world seem to be filled with Springsteen fans and we can count subscribers from all the big firms. One of our subscribers does a major comic strip syndicated in just about every newspaper in America. Another writes a well read gossip column and is considered the heir apparent to Ann Landers, though he has yet to shamelessly plug our magazine in his column (advice to the lovelorn: place a classified in *Backstreets*. One couple actually met and married thru our ads).

One longtime subscriber used to be roommates with Bruce in 1972. She says he was a great guy but didn't always wash his dishes. We mail the mag to several members of the gone-but-not-forgotten E Street Band. Sources tell us one intimate member of Bruce's family subscribes under a different name. We do send the magazine to Bruce and Patti. There are two other subscribers named "Springsteen" on our list, but they are not directly related. And in case you're wondering, we also have a subscriber named Presley from Nettleton, Mississippi.

Though our circulation is still very modest—less people than Bruce plays to at one arena show—we reach all 50 states and some countries that are so small I had to look them up on a world map. The zip codes run from Freehold, 07728, to Beverly Hills, 90210. I recently noticed a new subscriber from Ashland, Virginia on Snead Street—my grandfather built the house that's across the street. From my hometown to your hometown, this magazine reaches the breadth and scope of the nation.

I've listed a lot of professions here but I'd like to think of our subscribers on a more personal basis than their jobs. What stands out above all else are the ordinary people from all walks of life who aren't movie stars or relatives of Elvis, but to whom this magazine means something. They are sixth grade teachers from Spanaway, laid off factory workers from Tom's River, guys named "Fabio" from Milan, accountants from Tampa, waitresses from New York City, social workers from Los Angeles, fishermen from Alaska, high school students from Perth, brothers from Oklahoma, sign painters from Dallas, mothers of three from Michigan, firemen in Woodinville, grandmothers in Louisville, and even a mom from Newport News (my mom). I can name some of their jobs (when they have them—many have fallen through the cracks of Reaganomics) but I like to remember them more as fans just like me. You've probably read here that this magazine is not done to flatter Bruce himself, but for the people I've listed and the many others who support what we do.

I recently came upon the notebook in which I used to list all the subscribers to *Backstreets* when the magazine first started. For the first three years of existence I hand-wrote everyone's mailing label (there weren't a lot) and I kept the records in a ledger book. Looking back at those names, there are some that I hadn't heard from in years, which I guess is natural since people move and tastes change. But what was far more surprising to me was how many names I still recognize as subscribers, almost 12 years later. These early supporters of the magazine had their first subscription run out with *Backstreets #6* and many of them have renewed ten times since then.

This magazine represents more than just the 50 pound gloss paper, more than the saddle stitched binding, more than the soy-based ink stock, and more than the pictures and words reproduced here. A letter from a new subscriber in Gresham, Oregon put it better than I could: "I thought I was the only one who felt like this. Until. . ." Words like that are my living proof.

—Charles R. Cross

The Backstreets Subscriber Bulletin Board

To use any of the subscriber services listed here, simply complete the appropriate section(s) and mail entire coupon (or xerox or facsimile) to: BACKSTREETS, Subscriber Services, PO Box 51225, Seattle, WA 98115. Allow 6 weeks for processing.

New Subscriptions

To start a subscription to Backstreets simply check the appropriate box below, then print your name and address at the bottom. Your subscription will start with the next issue.

US and Canada
☐ 1 year ($15) ☐ 2 years ($25)
Best deal: 3 years ($32)
Overseas Airmail Service:
☐ 1 year ($20) ☐ 2 years ($35)

Easy Renewal

To renew your current subscription, simply check the appropriate box below, then print your name and address.

US and Canada
☐ 1 year ($15) ☐ 2 years ($25)
Best deal: 3 years ($32)
Overseas Airmail Service:
☐ 1 year ($20) ☐ 2 years ($35)

Great Gift Idea

Start a gift subscription for:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

US and Canada
☐ 1 year ($15) ☐ 2 years ($25)
Best deal: 3 years ($32)
Overseas Airmail Service:
☐ 1 year ($20) ☐ 2 years ($35)

Change of Address

If you're planning a move, please attach your mailing label here (or attach old address) then print new address at the bottom. Send early to ensure continuous service.

Be sure to complete this section in addition to any of the sections above. Please print.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Total Order $_____ ☐ Payment enclosed
(All Canadian and overseas orders must be paid with US funds)
☐ Bill my charge card. ☐ VISA ☐ Mastercard ☐ Eurocard
Card number _____ Expiration date _____
Signature _____
(Charge numbers must have either 13 or 16 digits)

SPRING 1992

THE BACKSTREETS COLLECTION 1-9

The first nine issues of Backstreets are completely sold-out, and valued at over $200. But don't worry, you can get a reprint of the first nine issues of Backstreets, including the impossible to find issue number one. Over 100 pages of great Bruce information, all in one volume. This item was printed for distribution with the Backstreets book, and we're now offering our remaining supply for only $12 each plus $3 shipping ($5 shipping per copy overseas). Send check, money order or credit card info to:

BACKSTREET RECORDS
PO Box 51219
Seattle, WA 98115

FOR SALE

SET SALE OF COLLECTION. VERY COLLECTIBLE, mint, import LPs, collected during 1982-85 era. Also paper goods. Send SASE for list: List PO Box 65431, St. Paul, MN 55165.

RARE "SANTA CLAUS" ON CD. UK SINGLE, $120. Call Bob at (908) 704-8152.

ROCK 'N' ROLL CONFIDENTIAL, THE controversial monthly newsletter edited by "Glory Days" author Dave Marsh. Sample $2; subscription $19.95. RRC, Dept. BS, Box 341305, LA, CA 90034.

SPRINGSTEEN COLLECTION, SASE FOR LIST. Springsteen, 250 Aspen St., Alexandria, VA 22305.

FEEL THAT HUMAN TOUCH! BEST BOSS VIDEO from '73-'92. U2 Zoo-TV tour also. SASE for new list to: TV, PO Box 1456, Pcfic Palsads, CA 90272.

EXCLUSIVE BRUCE AND FRIENDS EXCITING interview tapes, full length, unedited, never before offered. Castiles, Steel Mill bandmates, Vini Lopez, Southside, Gary Bonds, Madame Marie, Stone Pony friends, much more! List for SASE. Entertainment Net News, Suite 120, 7200 Franklin, Hollywood, CA 90046.

SPRINGSTEEN COLLECTION FOR SALE. SEND LSASE for list: Collene Rose, PO Box 34752, Phoenix, AZ 85067.

About Backstreets Magazine

Backstreets is a quarterly magazine that covers the music of Bruce Springsteen and other Jersey Shore performers. The magazine began in 1980 and over the years has covered Bruce Springsteen's recordings and performances more extensively than any other publication in the world.

Backstreets appears generally every three or four months though the actual publication date is affected by breaking news, tour coverage and the occasional special issue. Each issue of the magazine is progressively numbered. Subscribers can tell how many issues remain on their current subscription by looking at the number that appears above their name on their mailing label. If that number (it follows an "X") is the same number as the latest issue, your subscription has expired.

Unlike most larger, consumer magazines, *Backstreets* does not have the resources to continually bombard subscribers with renewal mailings so we appreciate our subscribers taking note of their expiration date and renewing when appropriate. You can renew your subscription at any time, and your prompt and early renewal is a great aid to us. Since *Backstreets* carries very little paid advertising, subscription revenue and sales of back issues and books are the only real income the magazine has so by subscribing or renewing you help us with this admittedly modest effort and showing your support.

Backstreets is available on a limited number of select newstands around the nation, though newstand availability is not something you can count on in most areas. If you're interested in the magazine, we highly recommend that you consider subscribing since subscribers are offered numerous benefits (see Hotline section below), in addition to the convenience of getting *Backstreets* hot off the press and at a discount from the cover price.

Stores interested in carrying *Backstreets* can contact our office: Though the magazine's audience is select, the sell-through percentage is extremely high and the magazine is offered to distributors on a guaranteed full return basis. *Backstreets* is also handled by a number of independent distributors including Ingram, IPD and Performance Records.

Subscription rates for *Backstreets* are $15 a year in the US and Canada (all prices are in US dollars); $25 for two years; and $32 for three years (the best value with a savings of $13). Rates for overseas subscriptions are $20 per year (again in US funds), or $35 for a two year subscription. You can enter a new subscription or renew your current subscription by writing to Subscriber Services, *Backstreets*, PO Box 51225, Seattle, WA 98115.

If you have a credit card you can FAX your order to us by calling (206) 728-8827. If you'd like to charge a subscription and don't have a FAX you can call our office at (206) 728-7603. Our office is open Monday thru Friday, from around 10 a.m. until 5 p.m., Pacific Time. Our phones are for orders and subscriptions only: Obviously we can't be working if we're answering questions about album releases or ticket sales. Please call our Hotline to be updated on all the latest news.

The Backstreets Hotline

To keep our subscribers updated with the current information during the time between issues, *Backstreets* provides a 24 hour a day information phone message, called the *Backstreets* Hotline. The Hotline is updated at least every week and contains all the latest available information on album releases, tour dates and appearances. There is no charge at present for the Hotline, though callers will pay the normal long distance charges if you are out of our calling area. The line gets hundreds of calls each week so calling at off hours is the best way to access it.

The phone number to the *Backstreets* Hotline is unlisted and unpublished since because of the high volume of calls the service can only be provided to current subscribers of the magazine. To assure that the service is only made available to those subscribers, the number to the Hotline is printed on the mailing sheet that goes to subscribers with each issue. We do change the number frequently to insure that the service is only accessed by those who are current subscribers (the number does occasionally get passed around by fans and even has been announced on the radio which causes the lines to be overloaded with non-subscribers who don't help support the service). If you're unsure of the present number for the Hotline and you are a current subscriber drop us an SASE, and we'll send it to you.

SuperSubs

Partially because of the demands of the Hotline, *Backstreets* also has a SuperSub program for those hardcore fans who also serve as the supporting members of our magazine. SuperSubs get an entire package of subscriber services in addition to their normal subscription and they are sent a special SuperSub-only Hotline number. SuperSub benefits include receiving the magazine sent first class, a special edition SuperSub t-shirt, a free classified ad in each issue, and a first class subscription to all Backstreet Records catalogs. Information on a SuperSub membership can be found on the inside back page.

Love letters, hate mail, etc.

Backstreets is very much a forum for the ideas and input of the many subscribers who contribute to the effort each issue. Letters to the editor are always welcome and we read them all and publish as many as space permits. Clips and xeroxes of news items sent in by subscribers are essential in helping us keep the magazine and hotline informative. Due to the number of inquiries we receive we cannot always answer every letter but we do respond to all who send in a SASE with their inquiry.

Backissues and past glories

Backstreets is the longest running Springsteen fanzine and it has been in business for over 11 years. The total number of pages we've published over the years represents the single largest chunk of Bruce Springsteen information ever compiled under one roof. Though many of the earliest issues are sold out and command high prices on the collector's market, a number of back issues are still available at reasonable prices until supplies are deleted. You'll find an order form in this issue of back issues still available or call our office.

In late 1989 a collection of some of the best articles from the magazine was published in the hardback book, *Backstreets, Springsteen: The Man and His Music* from Harmony Books. This 224 page book collects some of the best from past issues of *Backstreets* and also includes an extensive discography and a complete listing of all concerts Bruce Springsteen has ever performed. The book contains over 150 photographs of Springsteen, many in full color, and most have never been published before. *Record Collector* magazine described the book as "Wonderful, the best possible buy for the Springsteen convert," while the *Asbury Park Press* called the selection of photos "brilliant." The book is available in finer bookstores or by mail by calling *Backstreets* Orderline at (206) 728-7603.

Backstreet Records Catalog

Backstreets also has a separate division called Backstreet Records that publishes a mail order catalog of official and authorized Bruce Springsteen merchandise. Backstreet Records carries numerous books and fanzines about Bruce Springsteen and other related artists. You'll find information on getting the catalog mailing regularly on the inside back cover or you can write Backstreet Records at PO Box 51219, Seattle, WA 98115.

Most. 23-6-92

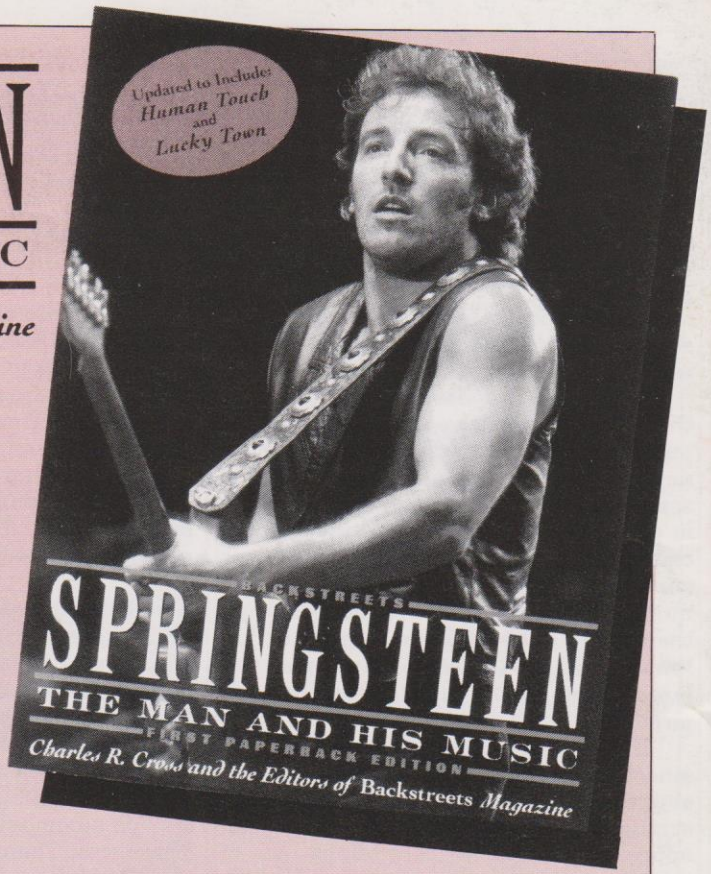
BACKSTREETS

SPRINGSTEEN

THE MAN AND HIS MUSIC

FIRST PAPERBACK EDITION

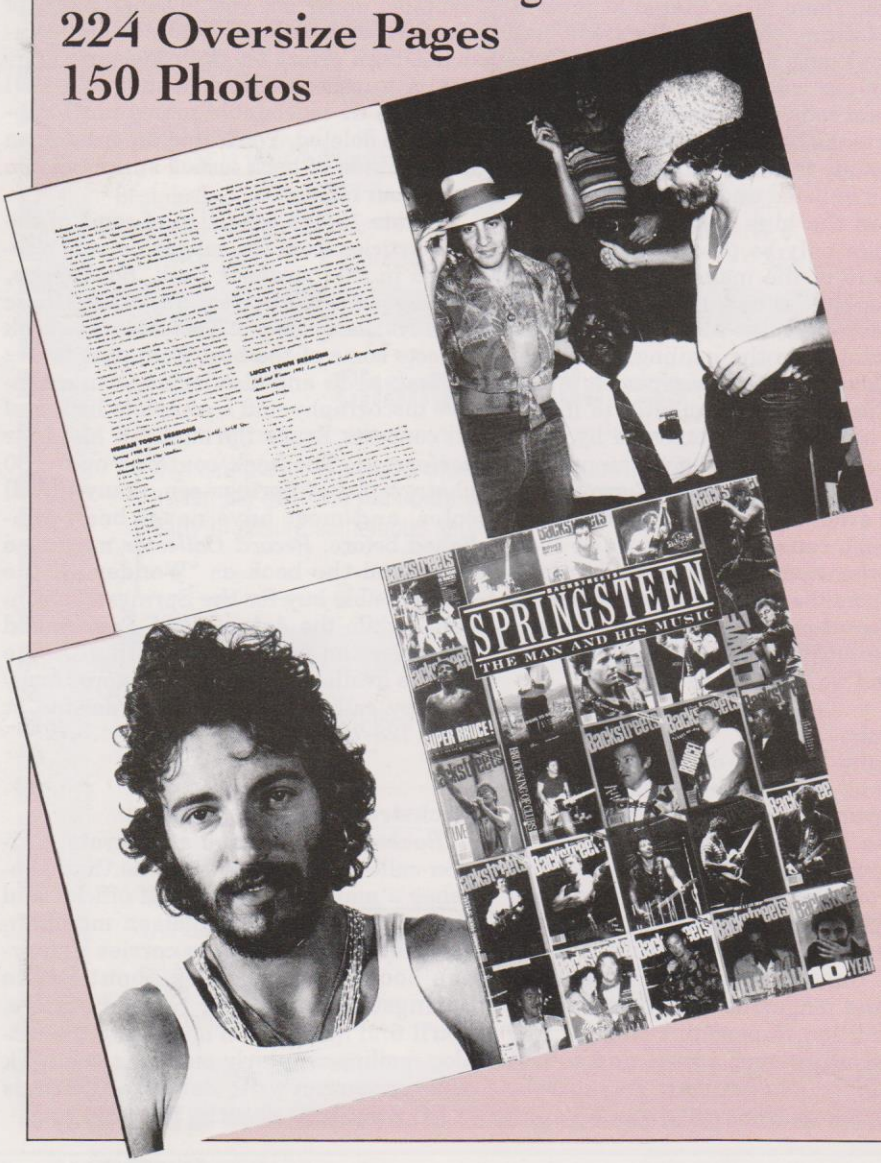
Charles R. Cross and the Editors of Backstreets *Magazine*



THE ULTIMATE BRUCE BOOK
NOW IN PAPERBACK!

- Completely revised and updated
- 30 new never-before-seen photos
- Updated thru February of 1992
- Includes complete "Human Touch" and "Lucky Town" session info
- New Mike Appel interview
- Revised studio listings

224 Oversize Pages
150 Photos



SPECIAL MAIL OFFER! GET A FREE COPY OF *BACKSTREETS #1* WITH EVERY PAPERBACK YOU BUY FROM US!

Backstreets Magazine is offering a limited number of signed first paperback editions with a limited edition reprint of *Backstreets #1*. The special reprint is free if you buy the book from Backstreets. The paperback of *Backstreets, Springsteen: The Man and His Music* is $19 plus shipping of $5 in the US, for a total of $24 postpaid.

Add another $3 per book (or a total of $27) for second day air in the US.
Canada: airmail add $8 ($27 US ppd)
Europe: airmail add $15 ($34 US ppd)
Asia: airmail add $20 ($39 US ppd)

For speediest service, fax your Visa, Mastercard, Eurocard or JCB, name and shipping address to our 24 hour Fax (206) 728-8827. Or mail a check/money order to "Backstreets," Book Offer, PO Box 51225, Seattle, WA 98115. Or if you'd prefer, call our toll free charge line during business hours at 1(800) 326-BOSS and order your copy today.